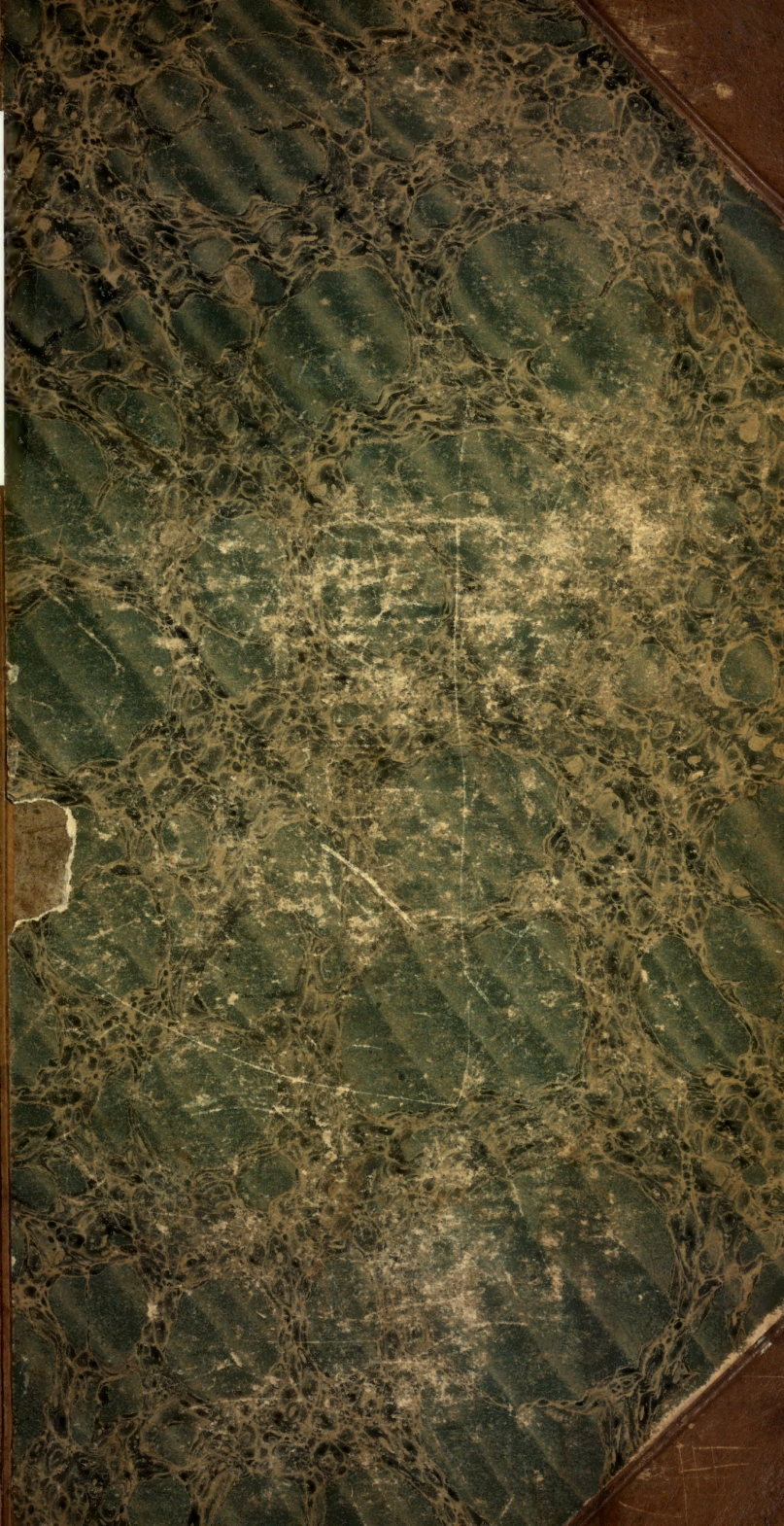
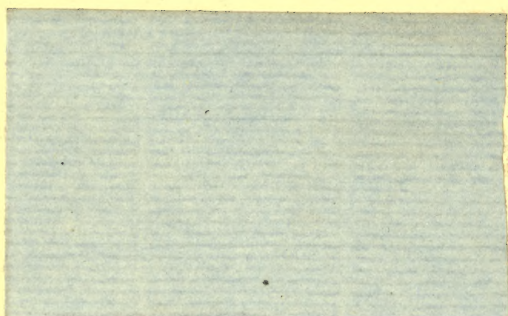
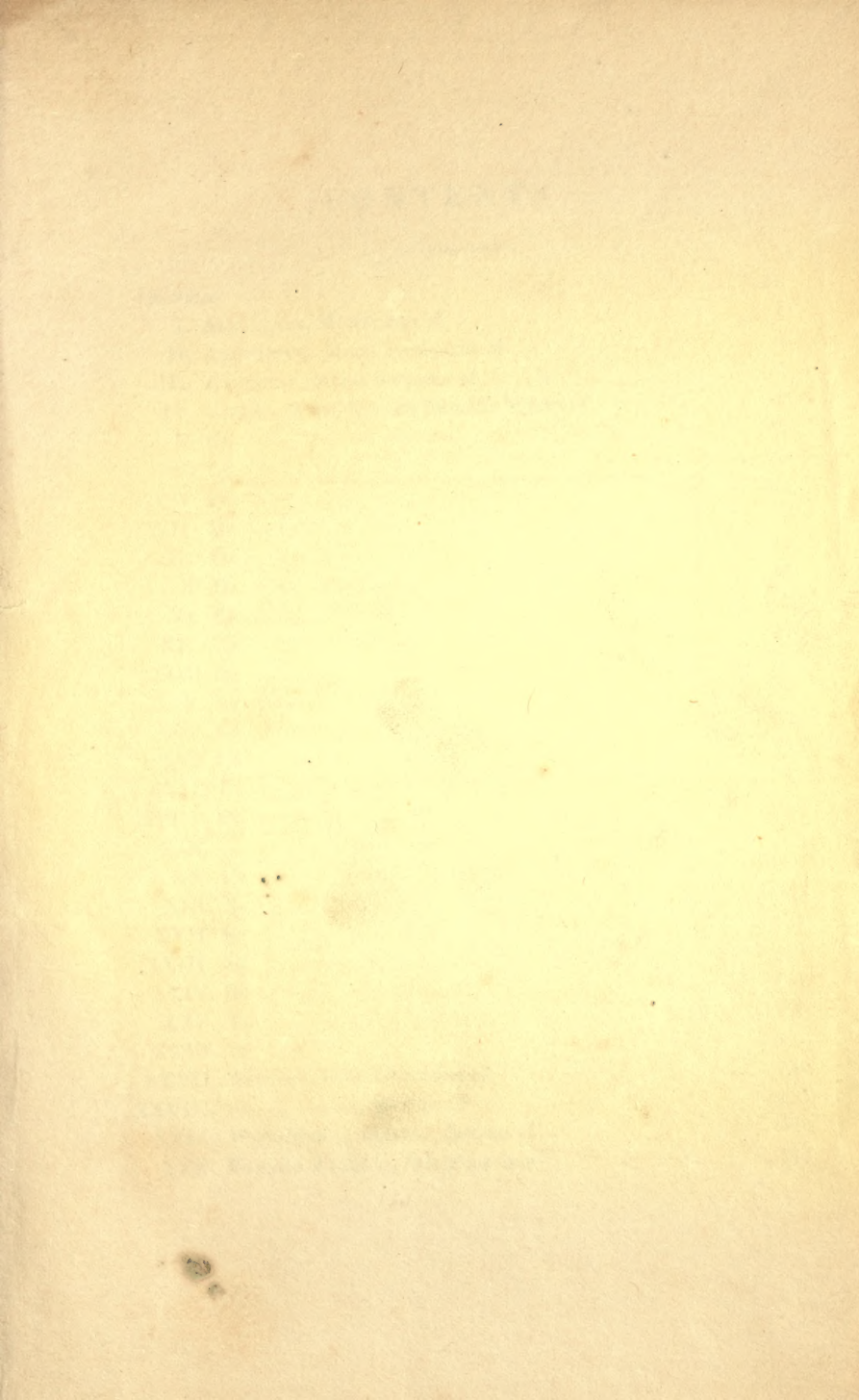




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BIBLE OF REASON.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MEDITATIONS OF ANTONINUS.

1. The world, or universal order of being, subsists by continual action or fluctuation, in a perpetual succession of individual nativity and mortality, production and extinction: we ought frequently to reflect deeply on the nature of the universe.

2. The faculty of generative vitality is the eternizing principle.

3. Some individuals are rushing on their career of existence, and others are hastening towards decay; nature is sustained by constant renewal, as time endures by perpetual continuance.

4. Substances naturally perish, and substances of the like kind are naturally produced, in endless progression: the flood of generations rolls on in its interminable course.

5. This whole scene of objects which we now behold, will very shortly be replaced by others of similar mode.

6. Let us reflect with what celerity the scenes of life are shifted; things glide along unceasingly like a rapid stream; the natural action is producing continual change; causes and effects are infinite in variety, and nothing is in a fixed and permanent state.

7. Matter is transformed from one form or substance to another, in an infinite operation. He who contemplates these perpetual changes and vicissitudes, thus rapidly rolling on, like one wave upon another, will entertain but an humble opinion of mortal affairs.

8. In short, the universal movement sweeps every thing before it into the ocean of eternity and oblivion: mutability of forms, but permanency of mode, is the attribute of the universe.

9. How rapidly does each individual object vanish and disappear! The individuals themselves are respectively absorbed in the immensity of the universe, and the memory of them, by the lapse of time, is sunk in oblivion! Every thing relating to us is fleeting and transient, and the reveries of the mind are as a vapour and a dream.

“Then what is life! 'Tis like a flower
That blossoms through one sunny hour,—

A bright illusive dream;

A wave that breaks upon the shore,

A lightning flash that straight is o'er,

A phantom seen—then seen no more—

A bubble on the stream!

Thus generations pass away—
 'Tis renovation and decay—
 'Tis childhood and old age ;
 Like figures in the wizard's glass,
 In long succession on we pass,
 Act our brief parts—and then alas !
 Are swept from off the stage.

And ye, ————— taught well,
 That onward years shall only swell
 The catalogue of change ;
 Yea, while we look around, and scan
 What happen'd in our own brief span,
 Things, which occur'd since life began,
 Even to ourselves seem strange."

10. He who has viewed the scenes of the present age, has seen every thing that has been, or that will be, in eternal time ; for the natural orders of generic being always have gone on, and always will go on, in the like uniform manner : the world never will come to an end, and it never sprung from any origin ; but itself is eternal : the things that have been, are the things that shall be.

11. We survey the sphere immediately around us, and our minds dwell on the multiplicity of objects regarded by our senses ; our imagination ranges into the infinite expanse beyond, and extends its contemplations to the boundless gulf of endless duration ; we experience and comprehend the periodical changes in every thing, and we discover that our successors will see nothing new, as our predecessors saw nothing more than we have seen.

12. Such is the uniformity of events, that he who has lived forty years, if he has been a man of observation, may be said to have experienced every thing past and to come.

13. If we reflect on what passes around us, we shall be convinced that all the occurrences of the present age, are but of what the histories of every age, of every nation, of every city, of every family, are full : there is nothing new, and particulars of similar mode are constantly repeated, and are evanescent.

14. All the occurrences of the present time, familiar to our experience, are transitory in their duration, and material in their nature ; in fact, the natural condition is precisely such as it was in the days of our forefathers, who ended in their graves.

15. He who fears death, either fears that he shall be deprived of all sense, or that he shall have different sensations ; now, in the extinction of all sensation, there can be no such thing as subjection to pain or deprivation.

16. When a person's series of actions has terminated, there remains nothing of him that can suffer detriment.

17. The material of nothing that dies, is lost to the universe, or annihilated.

18. Now, let us survey, as from an eminence, the numerous peoples and communities of mankind, and their various distinctions and modifications ; then consider the sudden decomposition which every

thing undergoes, and the brief span of time between their production and extinction.

19. Where are now those who once figured in the world? Nowhere. If we thus reflect, all human considerations will appear to us in their true light, as mere smoke and nullities; especially if we consider that what has once undergone dissolution will never be restored again to its identity.

20. In short, there is nothing much worth our attention but to act on all occasions with a strict adherence to truth and justice, and to live inoffensively even with those who act with fraud and incivility toward ourselves.

21. Every one should endeavour so to think and act, that his contemplative faculties and his personal talents, may proceed in a course of improvement. His clear conceptions, and positive knowledge, will then produce within him an entire confidence in himself; unperceived, indeed, by others, though not affectedly disguised, which will give a simplicity and a dignity to his character; for his constant mind will, at all times, be able to judge concerning the several objects which come before him, what is their real nature, and what their relative position among the things of the universe.

22. There is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we behold, when once we perceive its connexion with the general order of existence. The man who enjoys a sensibility of temper, with a just comprehension of the universal order, will discern the causes of many interesting facts, not perceptible to an unscientific mind, but to those alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with nature and its processes.

23. The arts are only the imitations of nature; design is but the availing ourselves of natural capabilities.

24. We should extend our critical investigations to those things which are most plausible; we should strip them of the dazzling embellishments and false colours with which they have been tricked out by eloquence, and thus we may be able to expose their worthlessness; for a solemn out-side show often conceals an impostor, and when we fancy ourselves the most seriously engaged, we are most probably allowing ourselves to be duped. "Pomp is a terrible sophister," said Crates.

25. We have to live, as well as to read and learn. The perusal of notes made by ourselves, and the extracts we take from other authors, will guide our conduct and amuse us in our old age, without troubling ourselves about the exploits related in history, and disregarding the imposing rites of superstitious observances. The chief end of instruction is to enable us to rely on our own decisions, without requiring to be assisted by the opinions of others; and this may be done by those who are no critics in the arts of rhetoric.

26. In the mind that is properly cultivated, we shall discover no symptom of vice or low-mindedness; nothing unsound under a spe-

cious display. Such a man can never be regarded as not having completed his moral character; for nothing remains about him of servility, nor of ostentation; nothing embarrassed, nothing selfish; nothing but what discloses an independent mind, and a freedom from every thing artful and disingenuous; he has thrown off the shackles of vulgar opinion, nor is he subservient to the craft of deluding others; truth he knows to exist in the necessary system of the universe, and not in the supernatural schemes established, for the time being, throughout the sectarian divisions of the globe; and this knowledge he hesitates not to impart to his fellow-men.

27. It remains for a wise and good man to observe a strict regard for truth in his expressions, and justice in his actions; and though all mankind should conspire to question his integrity and his disinterestedness, and even should dispute with him his own feelings and his pretensions to happiness, it behoves him not to be offended by their incredulity, nor to deviate from the path leading to the ends at which every one should aspire to arrive—a clear conscience, and an undaunted self-possession, or virtuous self-confidence.

28. A truly upright man should be so palpably such, as that no one could be for a moment in his company, or approach him, without being sensibly and necessarily convinced of his probity. True goodness, simplicity, and benevolence, are disclosed in the countenance, and cannot but be conspicuous.

29. We should behave in such a manner that we may be seen to be naturally well-disposed, rather than induced to act rightly by constraint and discipline.

30. Our observance of propriety should be habitual; and, if possible, we should have no faults to be corrected.

31. It discovers peculiar excellence in a man, to bear good-will even towards those from whom he has received insults. This we shall be disposed to do, if we reflect that the offender is our neighbour; that he may have acted through a mistaken impulse, and perhaps involuntary; and, moreover, that both he and we shall soon go quietly enough into our graves. But, above all, we should consider that we have sustained but little real injury, as our minds, or intelligent faculties, could not be degraded by another's offence.

32. We do well to persevere, not only in a consistent judgment and practice, but in a mild treatment of those who attempt to annoy, or in any way give us trouble; for it is equally an instance of weakness, either to be provoked by such people, or to desist from our purpose, and be deterred from our duty by them.

33. We should avoid whatever has the appearance of a malignant or impertinent curiosity; or of rancour, envy, or suspicion; and every other sentiment which we could not openly express.

34. Neither should we aim at setting off our expressions with affected elegance, nor use too many words on any occasion.

35. On every occasion we should consider what is most proper to

be said or done; for whatever that may be, it is in our power to say and to do it; and we need not pretend that it is in the power of any one to hinder us.

36. It is highly ridiculous not to get rid of our own faults, which is in our power; and to show such an abhorrence of, and be so eager to reform the frailties of other people, which is not in our power.

37. Let not the wickedness of the world disconcert us. Mankind, in general, will act precisely as they have done, though we should burst ourselves with indignation and with remonstrating against their absurdities. Human perfectibility, throughout the mass of mankind, is but a dream. It is our duty, however, to embrace every opportunity for extending improvement in as wide a sphere as possible.

38. We may leave the sins of others to their own consciences.

39. It is pleasing to recollect the virtues of our acquaintances; the diligence and attention of one, the modesty of another, the generosity of a third, and so forth; for nothing is more grateful to the imagination than to be surrounded by friends in whom an assemblage of good qualities displays itself.

40. We should accommodate ourselves to, and conform cheerfully with, those circumstances in which it is our lot to be placed; and we should love with sincerity those with whom we are by nature connected, provided they do not act so as to forfeit our esteem.

41. We need not be too anxious about future possibilities; we shall be able to encounter evils when they approach, under the conduct of the same reason which we had found useful to us in every previous emergency.

42. It is honourable to a man, that he wants not the assistance of others, nor depends for his happiness and tranquility, on the opinion of mankind; but neither ought we to be ashamed of receiving assistance when needed.

43. How preposterous is the conduct of men! They refuse the just tribute of praise to their contemporaries, amongst whom they live, and yet are extremely ambitious of the esteem of posterity, whom they never will see.

44. Can we be solicitous about our slender share of fame, when we reflect with what a fatal speed every thing is tending to oblivion—to that abyss of eternal duration, *past and future*? We should be sensible also of the emptiness and vanity of applause, and how undistinguishing are the judgments of those who bestow it, and to what narrow limits it is confined.

45. Observe to what sort of people those who aim at popularity are forced to pay their court, and to what mean condescensions they must submit, and what poor returns they often meet with; and, after all, how soon will time overwhelm and bury them all in eternal oblivion.

46. People often flatter those whom they despise, and affect to submit to those whom they are secretly endeavouring to undermine.

47. A stern and angry look is extremely unpleasant, and, if often

assumed, will gradually settle into a habitual feature, destroying the beauty of the countenance to such a degree as never to be recovered: any bad passion may be so indulged as to obliterate all sense of its deformity.

48. Strength of mind and true fortitude are attendants on a calm disposition, and by no means on passionate and peevish tempers.

49. Temperance has not only health to recommend it, but decency.

CHAPTER II.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL SENTIMENTS OF ARISTIPPUS.

1. What is gained by philosophy?—A capacity of conversing, without embarrassment, with all classes of men; the courage to exercise our right of speaking the truth to all the world.

2. What pertains to philosophers more than to others?—The privilege of living in their accustomed manner, provided all laws were abolished: if there were no laws, a right-minded man would live honestly.

3. Philosophy does not consist in denying ourselves the natural enjoyments which pleasurable occupy some moments of our lifetime, and which should be regarded as an equivalent for the troubles with which our path is strewn. To impose on ourselves useless self-denial, and, as it were, to study how to inflict it, is a species of insanity.

4. The business of philosophy is to regulate the senses, in that manner which will render them most productive of pleasure.

5. Wisdom consists in arming ourselves with fortitude sufficient for enabling us to support hardships when they unavoidably happen.

6. It must be confessed that those who practice excessive abstinence, merely take pleasure in privations because they find a gratification in them suited to their ascetic pride, that of persuading themselves that they are superior to those who do not object to partake of innocent enjoyments, and which they arrogate to themselves a privilege of despising and condemning. It may be said that they deprive themselves of nothing, since the pleasure of exercising their disdain has more charms for them than any sensible indulgence.

7. We need not shun the pleasures of the senses, but neither are they worth the trouble of eager pursuit.

8. Pleasant sensations, indeed, have their delights, and melancholy feelings should be dismissed; but we should repress the most exquisite emotions of the mind when they are likely to lead us into trouble and irregularity.

9. By thus limiting our pleasures, we shall be far from indulging them to a degree that approaches vice.

10. Real pleasure consists in that interior satisfaction which renders us happy.

11. Since pleasure is to be derived, not from the past nor the future, but the present, a wise man will apply to the enjoyment of the current hour, and will be indifferent to life or death.

12. I do not counsel you to neglect minor affairs, but not to be troubled by them; since vexation is not becoming even in matters of higher importance.

13. As it is not he who eats the more, but he who has the better digestion, that enjoys the better health; so it is not he who has read the more, but he whose studies have been the more useful, that ought to be esteemed the more respectable as respects his learning.

14. It is better to be poor than ignorant. Nothing may be wanting to the indigent but riches; whereas, the illiterate want the distinguishing characteristic of humanized nature.

15. Youth should be taught such accomplishments as will be useful to them when they shall arrive at manhood.

16. All crimes are, in a manner, venial; because they are never committed but under the immediate impulse of passion, or through the want of instruction as to their penal results, or owing to the mistaken views of interest to accrue from them. Man, being what he is moulded to be, those who so moulded him are, in some degree, accountable for his actions.

17. When at sea, in a tempest, he appeared to be much concerned, and one said to him, "How is it that we common sailors are not alarmed, but you philosophers betray your fears?" To which he replied, "There is a great difference between what we have at stake."

18. Being asked what was the difference between the instructed and the ignorant man—"Strip them," said he, "and send them both destitute among strangers, and you will soon perceive the difference."

19. He agreed with Socrates, in dismissing, as wholly unprofitable, all those speculations which have no connexion with the conduct of life.

CHAPTER III.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REMARKS OF ARISTOTLE.

1. The universe is eternal in its present nature: matter cannot be separated from its forms and real existence.

2. The parts of the world are in continual mutation: from the destruction of particular conformations, others succeed in their place, and by the action of affinities, the infinite medium is maintained in equilibrium.

3. The natural action, or motion, is itself eternal, as appears thus: the mover and the moved must either be eternal, or have had a beginning at some period. If they began at any time, it must have been by motion, and, consequently, before the first movement, there

must have been another, by which the first mover and the moveable began, which is absurd. Also: if they were eternal, yet without motion, it must either have been by reason of the inaptitude of the moveable, or of its remoteness from the mover; but neither could the moveable be made more apt, nor be brought nearer to the mover, except by motion; whence would follow, that there was no first motion. Again: Time, which is only the measure of motion, is necessarily and positively eternal; therefore, motion itself is eternal.

4. There is a perpetual succession of generations.

5. Take heed of the rapid course of the action of natural phenomena; look upon it as a circle which reverts into itself.

6. The imperceptible advance and retreat of the sea in different places is a constant process; and since time never ceases, those vicissitudes on the surface of the globe, of earth into sea, and sea into land again, continually happen from one age successively to another without intermission. This accounts for the fossils and shells imbedded in the different strata of rock remote from the sea.

7. Natural phenomena sometimes occur, by which whole countries become desolate, and the memory of things past is erased; accidents may intervene to occasion the loss of the arts themselves, but the exigencies of men, in process of time, cause their recovery or revival, by the same uses of natural means, and by the necessity for man's having recourse to art for administering to his wants; and, notwithstanding these interruptions and revolutions, yet the machinery of the world subsists without infringement.

8. The mind is not moved *per se*, but by accident or surrounding influences, and according to the affections of the body.

9. The senses, by which we observe and experience, are the foundation of all intelligence: no senses, no souls.

10. The senses are the criterion of physical facts; the intellect exerts its faculty of moral judgment; and the end of all our energies ought to be the practice of virtue in a well-spent life.

11. All virtue is placed in the medium; or, virtue consists in avoiding extremes.

12. Virtue consists not so much in just perceptions, as in correct habits, which require great length of time and much attention to form.

13. Practical virtue is acquired by exercise, and confirmed by reason.

14. A virtuous life is in itself a source of delight.

15. Disgraceful indulgences are unworthy of being named pleasures.

16. We ought not to determine hastily on any question newly proposed to us, but to consider of it maturely; and, in every such case, to doubt is not without its use.

17. The noblest employment of the mind is in the study of nature or truth.

18. Socrates and Plato may claim our respect, but we should

rather more highly regard truth than be willing to be influenced by a name.

19. Being properly informed men, we should remember not only that we are happy, but that we ought to be able to prove that we are so by solid reasons.

20. True happiness consists in the most disinterested and impartial action of the mind, and in the constant practice of all social duties.

21. Let a man be ever so wise, he cannot be happy while he is in distress and poverty.

22. A man may become rich by being poor in desires.

23. Some men live so sparingly, as if they expected to live always; and others so prodigally, as though they were to die on the morrow.

24. Vice is sufficient of itself to make a man thoroughly unhappy.

25. Vice tends to create misery, though he who allows himself in its practice be surrounded with all worldly advantages.

26. The study of the *belles lettres* contributes, in a great measure, towards the practice of virtue, and, in advanced life, its fruits are the greatest consolation imaginable.

27. Polite literature is the greatest ornament of prosperity, and the best consolation in adversity.

28. He who contends for distinction in science, must use his endeavours to outstrip those who are in advance of him, and not wait to be overtaken by those in his rear.

29. Those parents who educate their children well are more to be honoured than those who merely give them birth; for the ability to live well is the benefit of instruction.

30. Capacity, exercise, and discipline, are indispensable for a child to be well educated.

31. Justice is the virtue of rendering every man his due.

32. We should conduct ourselves towards others as we would expect them to act towards ourselves.

33. We should carefully avoid saying either good or evil respecting ourselves; doing the one is the part of a fool; the other that of a coxcomb.

34. Different individuals are often struck by similar ideas; therefore we ought not to be proud of our own knowledge in anything whereof we conceive ourselves to be the inventors.

35. To a conceited youth, he said, "young man, I wish I were what you think yourself to be."

36. Those heroes who are so gallant in action, are altogether as inactive and unmoved when they are not under its excitement.

37. Hope is a waking dream.

38. He who has many friends has none.

39. Long acquaintance is often called friendship, and so is intimacy; but they are very different things.

40. Let us look through the world and see if any man will sacrifice his own comforts and conveniences for his friends' sake.

41. There is nothing that goes out of recollection so soon as a favour that has been received.

42. A transient injury is better than a slow benefit.

43. Old people die without pain, because their dissolution is not occasioned by any violent affection.

44. Monarchs will always exhibit an inviolable attachment to the formalities of religion. ("Piety is as natural to kings, as flattery to their courtiers."—*Devereux*.)

45. There is no well-constituted commonwealth, but that in which such a general distribution of property prevails as to leave no room for discontents.

46. His philosophical doctrines concerning nature were not favourable to the public form of religion, and a priest accused him of holding and propagating impious tenets. Fearing a prosecution for the factitious crime of atheism, he quitted the city, saying, "he wished to spare the Athenians the commission of a fresh crime against philosophy."

CHAPTER IV.

MORAL EXTRACTS SELECTED FROM THE WORKS OF CICERO.

1. The knowledge of the truth is a man's highest attainment, and the object that is most worthy of man's researches. Those who seek this knowledge are termed philosophers; and philosophy consists in the love of truth. What can those prefer or esteem, who despise this acquirement, and who are opposed to its pursuit?

2. To investigate and prove the truth, seems to be the province of man. Are we relieved from indispensable attention to business, and freed from anxious cares? It is then we are excited by the desire of perceiving, understanding, and penetrating the subjects of which hitherto we had been unmindful; we then find it necessary to our happiness that we should become acquainted with the natural conditions of existence; and, really, nothing is better adapted for man's satisfaction, than the comprehending of truth in all its purity and simplicity.

3. A desire to be informed and enlightened is a kind of passion that urges us on; we long for information as the highest gratification; nothing mortifies us more than to find that we have been abused and misled, and to discover that our ignorance is owing to our having been deceived.

4. Those alone who are well-informed can form a judgment of what is correct sense.

5. If a right understanding directs a man in the path of duty, it is solely to be sought, or surely to be estimated much more highly than aught beside.

6. O philosophy! be thou the guide of our lives. Thou alone disposest us to embrace virtue and repel vice. Linked by thee in

society, pleasing converse and correspondence heighten our enjoyments. Thou softenest our manners, and from thee we derive consolation in our afflictions. A single day passed in conformity with thy precepts is better than an age spent in folly. We owe to thee the tranquillity of our lives, and it is thou who relievest us from the terrors of death.

7. Among those who profess philosophy, how few are those whose manners, sentiments, and actions, are conformable to reason; whose doctrines are the rules of their conduct, and who regulate their desires and passions on their own principles! Some are actuated by ostentation alone; some are insatiable in their thirst for riches, and some aim at vain glory; others are subjugated by their own vile tempers, and nothing can be more at variance than their mode of living with the exalted maxims of which they boast. Can anything be more inconsistent.

8. If a grammarian express himself inelegantly, or a musician sing without taste, they merit the less indulgence for defects in the arts they profess; so, he is equally contemptible who pretends to the science of good conduct and yet deviates from propriety in almost every act of his life.

9. Let us duly appreciate the powerful remedies supplied by philosophy for correcting the human infirmities. It is in the use of our reason that these remedies are found; reason, which, rightly conducted, leads to the enjoyment of the highest satisfaction, and which, if ill directed, sinks us deep in the shades of error. Correct reason is the chief object of respect.

10. How ridiculous have been the propositions advocated by some pretenders to philosophy! If we give heed to hypotheses and theories that are foreign to the order of nature—such as attributing intelligence to the sun, stars, planets, &c., thus deifying senseless masses—we might as well listen to the trumpery of the temples.

11. Impelled by their appetites solely, other animals have no idea but of the present time; but man's instincts, enlightened by reason, enable him to perceive the consequences of things; he acquaints himself with causes and effects, and compares the relations they have with each other; his experience of the past subserves the uses of the future; he extends his foresight, and acquires a provision for spending the residue of his days in comfort.

12. Man's intellect has penetrated the skies; he alone comprehends the risings and settings of the stars, and watches their courses; he notes the days, months, and years, as they elapse; he calculates the eclipses of the sun and moon, predicts them long before they happen, and determines exactly their extents, their periods, and their durations. Nothing seems wanting to his intelligence except immortality; but this circumstance is not necessary for his enjoying satisfaction during his life.

13. The term of man's life, like all other things, has its bounds limited by nature, and it is pleasant to view the approach of death,

when we can console ourselves with the reflection that our lives have been usefully and honourably spent: placid and soothing is the remembrance of a life passed with truth, innocence, and taste; self-esteem, and a satisfactory self-confidence in looking to the future, are the portion of those to whom the past offers no cause for reproach.

14. I shall never regret my life passing away, if I have lived in such a manner as to be conscious of not having lived in vain.

15. No period of our life seems long when we look forward to its termination. When this term has expired, what remains of all its occupations? Only the credit that results from our conduct and virtue. Hours, days, months, and years, all pass away, and the particular individuals of the world with them, and no one can calculate with certainty on a future moment.

16. "Premature death is shocking!" exclaims the good woman. How premature? Before the period prescribed by nature? But, as at the commencement of life, there is no term fixed for its duration, how can we complain, let it terminate when it will? We hold it under its casual contingencies; and how can that be regarded as a particular hardship which befalls us under the natural conditions to which all are liable?

17. Conscious integrity alone can console us for the shortness of our life. Our character is the only appurtenance which survives our decease: all that can remain of the dead consists in the recollections of those who have survived them.

18. There is yet a higher source of consolation and support; for, so long as we shall preserve our innocence, we need never be anxiously disturbed about any event that may happen; and when we shall cease to exist, all our sensibility will terminate with us.

19. What kind of philosophy is it to extol melancholy, that most lamentable of passions?

20. Have we discharged the office of judging for ourselves? Are we freed from the ascendancy of those impressions which had been forced upon us, and do we no longer think it incumbent to defend our erroneous prepossessions? This is to be truly free. But most men have been drilled into a habit of belief before they were able to exercise their reason in judging of truth; accustomed from infancy to submit themselves to the guidance of their parents, or beguiled by the plausible arts of those who first get the direction of their intellectual faculties, they imbibe the vulgar notions, are biassed in their favour, and cling to them as closely as they would to a rock on which they had been thrown by a tempest.

21. Our parents, our nurses, our preceptors, our poets, our theatres, our temples, the prevailing prejudices in favour of customary opinions, all seem to mould our character, and lead us astray from the truth; all conspire to allure us from the simple path of nature: they avail themselves of their power over us while we are young and flexible, and they deprave us by making us conform and bend to their own

corrupt and sophisticated customs and notions. We are persuaded also to judge those as wicked who are free from our errors.

22. We have been insensibly trained in depravity ; we have been so far involved in error as to separate the idea of goodness from that of utility, and the idea of truth from that of reality ; so far have we been led to deviate from reason as to believe in a goodness different from moral propriety, and to hold the faith that there is a truth more to be regarded than natural fact. Never could men conceive opinions at the same time so false and pernicious ; so fatal to good sense and right motives of conduct.

23. Our sensibility to natural truth can never be entirely suppressed ; but it is degraded by sensuality and indolence, and perverted by the consecrated prejudices and customs of vulgar society.

24. Reason and truth should be more regarded by us than vulgar opinion.

25. As there is nothing superior to a knowledge of the truth, so nothing is lower in the scale of intellect than to be attached to error and mistake it for truth.

26. How unphilosophical is it to conceive falsely and defend absolutely what has not been thoroughly examined nor clearly comprehended ! How prudent is it to refuse our assent to what is unproved and incomprehensible !

27. Of all villany, none is more capital than that of those who when they deceive do it under the cloak of pretended truth and righteousness.

28. How shameful for one who professes to instruct, and who ought to have made researches into and comprehended the natural conditions, to palm a testimony suited to minds prepossessed by custom, and falsely to set forth as proofs of truth, that which is but prejudice and vulgar opinion.

29. In order the better to support a vain prejudice, it is usual to cite the opinion of the many and of great names ; as if it were not the fact that the greater number is in delusion, and as if it were needful to quote the authority of others in points disputed, and to decide on which we should use our own rational judgment.

30. To rely implicitly on another's representations prejudices our opinion, prevents us from using our own judgment, and deprives us of the capacity to receive instruction.

31. Experience establishes natural conclusions, and obliterates opinions that are merely notional. [It is the glorious doom of literature, that the evil perishes and the good remains.—*Edinburgh Review*.]

32. While we adhere to nature as our guide, we are under no risk of failing in our attempts to arrive at truth : nature, eternal nature, is truth.

33. If we find the acquisition of this knowledge easy, the happier it is for us, and we may rejoice ; if we encounter difficulties in our researches, we should persevere nevertheless in our own exertions

till we are able to arrive at satisfactory conclusions as to what is truth : it would be shameful to tire in so noble a pursuit.

34. It is not possible that anything should occur without its cause existing in the necessary processes of nature. Phenomena may happen out of the ordinary course of our experience, but that they should be contrary to, or at variance with the order of nature, is impossible.

35. The world is nature, and besides the world there is nothing : there are no supernaturals.

36. Should anything seem to appear strange, prodigious—find out its cause if you can ; if you cannot discover its immediate occasion, be assured nevertheless that there can be no effect without its connexion with a natural relation.

37. An acquaintance with nature will enable us to reject the errors that spring from ignorance regarding various phenomena. Then we shall not be terrified by subterranean sounds, the skies which seem to be opened when it lightens, the appearances which resemble stars shooting in the atmosphere, the meteors that dance about, the showers of blood and stones that are said to have fallen, &c. &c.

38. Exposed to peril, and under the influence of terror, we are the more disposed to give credence to prodigies ; and at periods when ignorance fear and credulity abound, miracles are invented with less liability to detection.

39. It is obvious that such impostures can only be acceptable to the ignorant and credulous, but can by no means be approved by people of thought and consideration.

40. From things natural have arisen fictions and imaginary powers, or notions of deities, which have been the foundation of false opinions, pernicious errors, and wretched superstitions ; for these idols have been represented with the passions of blood-thirstiness and anger—and to be propitiated accordingly.

41. Ye moral fools ! How monstrous would be the iniquity of your God, if there were such as you say, whose wrath must be appeased by the shedding of innocent blood !—a vicarious sacrifice ! And this, too, ye call satisfying divine justice.

42. The true principle of deism has been the attributing divinity to nature ; and this has supplied the poets with fables, and filled the world with all kinds of delusion.

43. Spread over the earth, superstition imposes its yoke upon the mind of almost every one, and domineers over the weakness of men. O ! that it were extirpated even to its most latent roots ! What greater service could be rendered to mankind ?

44. No awful name should impose upon our imagination, but we should rid ourselves of every species of superstition. It haunts and molests us ; retreat where we will, it still besets and annoys us.

45. So horribly ridiculous have all religious ceremonies been, that, to exceed in absurdity any which have hitherto existed, it only remains for a sect of such monstrous extravagance to arise, amongst

whom it will be an ordinance to devour the God which they adore.*

46. Cato the Censor said,—“It was surprising that the priests, during the performance of their divine service, could refrain from bursting out into a loud laugh in the faces of their congregations.”

47. The term “religion” merely originated from the ancient practice, similar to the modern, of formally repeating over and over, at stated periods, the rituals of worship, or forms of prayer in use; the word *religiosi*, religious, being derived from *relegendo*, reading over again and again.†

48. Nations are divided by their different religions. Some prostrate themselves before the vilest creatures of their imagination, and suppose them to be invisible powers; others are subject to various superstitions not less absurd. But, is there a people in the world who do not respect moral propriety—justice and humanity? Are there any who do not condemn pride, knavery, cruelty, and ingratitude?

49. If we contemplate the sky, the earth, the sea—all the objects naturally presented to our view; if we regard ourselves, not as confined by narrow limits, nor pent up in a corner of the world, but as citizens of an entire globe, which serves as our abode; from this station of sublime meditation, which commands the spectacle, and furnishes us with the knowledge of existence, how perfectly shall we arrive at an acquaintance with the natural conditions of our being, and how lightly shall we think of all those futile ceremonies to which the vulgar attach so great an importance.

50. What can there be of importance in human forms and ceremonies to him whose ideas are conversant with infinity? Ignorance of infinity has occasioned men’s falling into all errors and contractedness of mind. Morally denied to comprehension, the universe cannot be subject to a comprehension—a fancied god. A moral impossibility cannot be a moral possibility; and to this positive demonstration ignorance alone can keep men insensible.

51. He alone enjoys independence whose mind is unfettered. In fact, what is freedom? It consists in the power of acting conformably with our desires. And who is he that lives as he wishes? Certainly not he who is compelled to act rightly by fear. But is it not he who is devoted to justice, who adheres to his duty from principle, who prescribes to himself a moral rule of conduct, who delights in propriety because there is nothing so eligible; in short, he who acts without constraint, whose every thought and action is the offspring of a rational purpose; who relies on his own judgment, and forms his own determinations; and who, in the end, is independent of fortune itself.

52. To be firm and unwavering in their principles, of tried con-

* This dreg of the cup of superstition seems to have been fully drained by the modern partakers of the body and blood of Christ.

† Religion, then, means nothing more than a prayer-doling, bead-telling, bell-tolling custom.

stancy, of irreproachable integrity, incapable of yielding to their passions, or of displaying presumption and egotism : such are the characters we should esteem. It is these who, as far as is compatible with human weakness, have adopted nature for their guide. Who, then, better than they, can be proposed as examples for our imitation ?

53. Virtue requires no other recompense than the tribute of self-approbation and respect ; it can never be more respectable than when practised without ostentation, and when it is withdrawn from the public gaze. Not that it is incumbent to shun observation, for good actions show to advantage in the full light ; but our own conscience is the proper sphere of satisfaction.

54. We should be satisfied with the exemplary practice of those virtues that are useful and necessary in ordinary life ; without aiming at a perfection which can only be the object of aspiration, and never existed except in fable.

55. We should impose on our desires the sway of reason ; our wishes should never disturb our peace of mind.

56. All the great virtues become extinct in him who yields to selfish ambition, or to habits of voluptuous indulgence.

57. Since it is not our lot to live with those who are perfect and consummate in wisdom ; and since it is rare that we find in society even a slight resemblance of virtue, we should be careful not to neglect those in whom we may discern some promising qualities ; but principally, our attention should be directed towards those happy and privileged characters whose shining endowments render them the ornaments of society ; whose modesty and moderation stamp their deportment with goodness.

58. Those who consecrate their lives to literature, and who apply all their endeavours to the acquisition and increase of knowledge, cannot be accused of abandoning general usefulness ; on the contrary, their country is indebted to them for great advantages : the intelligence they disseminate enlightens their fellow-citizens, and fits them for the better discharge of their social duties.

59. The instruction received by that portion of the community that has been disposed to profit by their lessons and example, is but a small part of the benefit that is derived from the wise and liberal ; the works which they leave behind yield greater advantages to posterity than they themselves rendered to their cotemporaries.

60. Leaving out of the question the advantages that a taste for letters supplies, and regarding them merely as a pastime, they will always form the most respectable occupation for a man not engaged in business.

61. A liberal education possesses us of a companion that is our delight in prosperity, and that consoles us in adversity ; at home, abroad, in society, or in solitude—at all times, and in all places, it is the charm and solace of our life.

62. Those who do not, in themselves, possess resources for render-

ing their course of life agreeable, will find all its different periods irksome to support ; but if we seek our felicity in communing with our own hearts, we shall be able to take delight in every thing that nature admits or necessity imposes.

63. We should always act in a way so as to be able to render satisfactory reasons for our conduct ; this rule defines almost the extent of our duties.

64. He is sufficiently enlightened, who knows how to act rightly, and who has the power to refrain from evil : it is by actions that a true value and recommendation are given to virtue.

65. Constancy and firmness form the characteristics of serene and composed minds.

66. We are not fitted by our nature merely for amusing ourselves ; our natural duties require rather a sedateness of character, and occupations that are arduous and useful. If relaxation is sometimes admissible, it should be indulged in like sleep and repose, after having duly attended to our serious avocations.

67. Let us consult our own capacities ; let us severally inspect our natural abilities and our defects. We should not allow stage actors to display more judgment than ourselves ; they do not always make choice of the most prominent characters, but of those which are most suitable to their talents. Let us, then, apply ourselves to those pursuits for which we are best adapted ; and if necessity compel us to resort to those that do not comport with our taste, let us strive by every means to exert our intelligence and industry, so that we may perform our duties, if not with *eclat*, at least with credit.

68. Consistency of character results from acting always in a manner that is natural. Certainly there can be nothing more becoming than the perfect accordance of our actions through life ; but we shall never arrive at this excellence, if, neglecting our proper sphere, we waste our time in affecting to imitate others : we do well to act in harmony with our proper bent, and without doing violence to the general dictates of human nature.

69. The moment we quit the paths of prudence, and become unable to use our judgment, our passions hurry us headlong ; human weakness seeks its relief in yielding to their force ; and, insensibly, we find ourselves launched on the wide deep, destitute of rudder and tackle, and the sport of every wave.

70. Which is the obligation that is most binding on society ? It is the firm conviction that one man ought not to injure the person of another man, nor appropriate to himself another's property ; that a greater outrage against humanity cannot be committed ; and that it is preferable to endure the reverses of fortune, disease, mental alienation, in short, every thing that can happen to us for the worst, rather than to offend against justice ; for that only is the legitimate rule, and the principle of all duties.

71. Justice consists in doing no injury to men ; civility, in giving

them no offence : we should be as careful of our words as our actions ; as far from speaking as acting ill.

72. No infamous conduct can be of real service, even though we might secure by it, what is termed by some, an advantage ; it is a deplorable misfortune to regard that as beneficial which is dishonest.

73. The most awful injustice is for an order of men to make mankind subservient to their interests by deceiving them.

74. Injustice, committed either by violence or deception, is alike unworthy of man ; but fraud seems to be the more odious means of the two : can there be a more abominable infringement of justice than pretending to be honest, and at the same time be planning how to delude ?

75. It is natural that we should acquire for ourselves what is necessary for supplying the exigencies of life ; but to detract from another's means, and for one man to multiply his own conveniences by appropriating the conveniences of another, is morally indefensible.

76. No man even ought to take advantage of another's simplicity, gain aught thereby for himself. In the sale of an article, every particular should be fairly stated, that the purchaser may not be ignorant of any of its qualities known to the seller.

77. Merely to discharge our engagements to the letter, and not to adhere to their spirit, is to elude rather than to fulfil them ; we may not be bound by words, yet still be responsible in fact. When a promise is to be performed, it behoves us to regard the sense of it, and not find subterfuges by perverting its terms.

78. If it be the fact that it is a natural duty for a man to assist his fellow, solely because he is man, it is also natural that all particular interests should unite for the common welfare.

79. Every one ought to propose to himself, as the rule of his conduct, that his own advantages should, at the same time, promote the general utility.

80. If we would merit confidence, we should combine integrity with ability. The greater acuteness a man possesses, the more odious and suspected he becomes, when he loses his reputation for honesty.

81. That energy of mind, and that prompt resolution, which distinguish a man in enterprise and in dangers, are but vicious qualities if not associated with justice. If he contend not for the common welfare, but only to aggrandize himself, then he can no longer be actuated by virtue, but is impelled by a ferocious rapacity that outrages humanity.

82. It is not a visible retribution which sometimes does not take place at all, often incompletely, and which may be eluded ; it is the conscience that takes vengeance of the wicked. It is not, as the fables say, that the fiery torments of hell await the guilty ; but consuming uneasiness, and the gnawing sense of their crimes ; the degradation of honour and humanity, and the loss of conscious innocence and self-respect.

83. How great is the power of conscience! Its consolations are not less felt, when it secures the innocent from all fear, than its severe inflictions endured by the guilty, while they are unceasingly haunted by the remorse that has been incurred.

84. It would be absurd, amongst any people, to regard as just all that the laws sanction. Would the Athenians have been more equitable if they had ratified the decrees of their thirty tyrants?

85. Justice is simple; and it is that which connects most strictly the relations of society; it springs from the principle of correct natural reason and necessity, which alone has the right of allowing or forbidding; which distinguishes good and evil actions; what is just and what is unjust; what is approvable and what reprehensible; whether this law be expressed or not, whoever infringes it, or is insensible to it, cannot be just.

86. If justice merely consisted in obedience to promulgated laws, he who had it in his power to break or disregard them would not hesitate to do so if he could gain any thing thereby.

87. Whether we are intrusted with an official post, or engaged in active business; whether we aspire to public distinction, or are occupied in attentions to our domestic concerns; whether we live retiredly, or enter much into society—no course of life can be exempt from duties; respectability consists in observing them, and dishonour consists in neglecting them.

88. Our conduct, in many occasions of private life, may admit of a certain courage being exercised, which is not inferior to the warrior's bravery:—

“Not in the ensanguined field of death alone
Is valour limited;”

some occasions require even more perseverance and endurance.

89. The mere consciousness of intending well, however approvable, is very liable to the commission of a serious fault. It is an empty self-sufficiency, and the conceit that no one can be better, or know more than ourselves, when, in fact, we are really ignorant; and thus a habit of presumptuously and confidently adhering to our opinions, may lead us into much obstinate error or bigotry. He who would be free from this vice (and how many are there who stand in need of this admonition?) must modestly suspect that he may not always be totally in the right; that his pretensions to know a thing may be false, and that his ideas may be merely opiated notions. Good intention, or good opinion of self, is often connected with much narrowness of mind and prejudice; there is also much wickedness in the thing; for, once wound the stupid pride of these contracted well-meaners, and they will never pardon you, but do you all the injury in their power during life. Conceited persons are liable to commit more mistakes than even absolute dunces.

90. Our whole conduct should be regulated according to a sense of propriety. Nothing in our manners should partake of effeminacy

or affectation, and our deportment should be free from rudeness and vulgarity.

91. We ought to live with our fellow-citizens as with equals; without obsequiousness or meanness, and without arrogating any self-importance; we should desire nothing but what is right, and contribute, by our example, to the maintenance of good order in society; and every one should conform to this good order.

92. The sweetest and most satisfactory connexions in life are those formed between persons of congenial minds, equally linked together by the conformity of their virtues, and by the ties of esteem.

93. What a charm would be wanting to our felicity, if no one deigned to share with us our enjoyments. How hard would it be to support afflictions, if no warm heart sympathised with us in our sorrows.

94. Each object of our desires has its disadvantages; a good use may be made of riches; power may yield us honour and respect; pleasure may fill us with ecstasy; health may preserve our corporeal faculties in their full vigour; but how many advantages are combined in friendship! It adds an additional zest to prosperity; and adversity, shared by it, loses much of its bitterness.

95. The friend of our choice should be warm-hearted and constant; but there are few men found to realize this character; it is difficult to judge of a person's qualities without putting them to the test, and this can only be done during intimacy, and then friendship influences the judgment, and puts it out of our power to make the necessary proof.

96. Caution is requisite, not to give way too readily to indiscreet emotions of tenderness; prudence requires that we make a trial of that person's worth who pleases us; for some, on a slight occasion, will discover their inconstancy, and we may commence by loving that person whom in the end we may despise.

97. An endearing and generous character, and a mild address, are the principal attractions to form friendships; a disposition to be morose and severe may well be considered grievous to bear with; friendship rather calls for ease and liberty, kindness and indulgence, an inclination to good temper and affability.

98. By the laws of friendship we may expect kind offices from our friends, and ought to return them the same; we should always be ready to assist them frankly with our counsels, admonish them on proper occasions, and, if necessary, even censure them with warmth; and the salutary advice of a judicious friend should have its just weight with ourselves.

99. We must despair of him who closes his ears against the truth, and will not listen to reason, even from the mouth of a friend.

100. Cato well said—"the open animosity of hatred often injures us less than the apparent kindness of friendship:" our enemy never conceals from us the truth; a complaisant friend is not faithful enough to risk incurring our displeasure by its disclosure.

101. Some men recognize nothing in the world to be worthy of their regard, if it does not conduce to their own immediate interest; they choose their friends as they do other animals of use, preferring those from whom they expect the most services.

102. Tarquin, in his exile, declared that he had never been able to distinguish his real friends from his perfidious courtiers, till after it became out of his power to oblige any one.

103. An unavoidable unpleasantness sometimes occurs in friendship; it is, to be obliged to come to a rupture. A discovery may be made of vices that had been concealed, and whether ourselves or others be the victims, we cannot avoid being identified with the shame. The better way is to cool insensibly in our intimacies with those who prove unworthy of our attachment. As Cato says,—“we should unseam, and not rend apart.” But in cases of infamous conduct, which cannot be dissimulated, we are then authorized by honour, justice, and even by necessity, to dissolve the connexion with marked displeasure.

104. He can have no idea of honourable conduct, who permits himself to exhibit openly, and read aloud, the letters of a friend, in which are expressed sentiments calculated to injure him if promulgated; not to respect the confidential disclosures of our friends, is to break asunder the ties of society itself.

105. In the differences that may arise between us and our greatest enemies, while they permit themselves to utter the vilest abuse, we should make an effort to contain ourselves; we should be calm and repress the stirrings of passion. If we once allow ourselves to get irritated, we shall no longer be able to preserve our self-command, and, at last, shall find that those will decide against us, who would otherwise have been disposed to take our part.

106. It is not only fortune herself that is blind, but those are blinded who are favoured with her caresses.

107. What fools are the rich and fortunate; they amass costly possessions, and neglect to acquire the love and esteem of those amongst whom they live—the treasures that are the most valuable.

108. With what insolent ostentation thou displayest thy riches! Art thou alone rich? Is it nothing to have applied assiduously to the acquiring the riches of the mind? Thou, only rich! and if thou wert not rich only, that wouldst thou be beside?

109. The thirst of heaping together money can never be slaked; avarice can never be satisfied; we are tormented by the rage for adding to, as much as by the fear of losing that which we possess.

110. To view the good fortune of another should not have the effect of rendering us dissatisfied with our own humbler lot.

111. It is not so much the amount of our incomes, as the manner of our living, that should constitute our riches.

112. To be without desires is an assured capital; to spend no money in superfluities, or through caprice, is an ample interest; to be content with what we possess is the most certain of fortunes.

113. If fortune snatch from us our wealth, or if injustice deprive us of it, so long as our reputation is unsullied, our honour may, in some degree, console us for the loss of our property.

114. We should give handsomely; and in requiring the payment of that which is our due, we need not be too rigorous. If we purpose buying, selling, leasing, fixing the boundaries between our own lands and those of our neighbours—on all these occasions, we should display ourselves just and liberal; we should avoid litigation as much as possible, admitting rather somewhat that is unreasonable; for it is not merely generosity, but often an advantage, not to exact the utmost of our claims.

115. Nothing is more grateful to the nature of man than beneficence; but it should be exercised with judgment. Caution is required not to bestow favours that would actually be injurious; our liberality should be regulated by our means, and our benefits suited to the wants of the recipients; for this is to be just, and with justice all our actions should accord.

116. A prudent man will no more abandon himself to the violent transports of benevolent emotion, than he will expose himself to the danger of falling down a precipice. The affections of the heart should neither be violently indulged, nor servilely depressed.

117. It is a principal part of duty to render assistance where it is absolutely needed. This is not often the case. We are most eager to oblige those from whom we expect the most, and who are in want of nothing.

118. A habit of benignity is preferable to munificence; the former is really honourable, but the latter is practised by those who would flatter the crowd for their own ends, and gratify their levity by furnishing them with frivolous amusements; even a laudable act seems to be rendered vile by the vulgar applause.

119. There are many who, though far from being naturally generous, yet are dazzled by the glare of vain glory; their acts of munificence are prompted by ostentation, and, in some degree, are begrudged by themselves; this falsity savours more of puerile vanity than of principles of goodness and virtue.

120. It is not rare to meet with those who are foolishly ambitious of display and inclined to prodigality, and who will rob some in order to obtain the means of being lavish towards others; so that they enrich their friends, they are not very scrupulous as to the means they employ, and yet they expect to be esteemed generous; nothing can be more contrary to duty than such conduct.

121. The prodigal dissipate their fortunes in giving parties, in the chase, and at play. What results from their stylish mode of living? But a transient *eclat*, even if noticed at all. Those who are really generous, consecrate their wealth to acts of true beneficence, and add to their own happiness by assisting to promote the interests of those who are deserving.

122. To appear eager to serve others when it is not in our power,

is imprudence; to be able to fulfil our promises, and not to do it, is negligence or perfidy.

123. An ungrateful man is detested by all; every one feels hurt by his conduct, because it operates to throw a damp upon generosity, and he is regarded as the common injurer of all those who stand in need of assistance.

124. It is seldom that meanness of disposition is found associated with high mental attainments.

125. In company, we should conform to the tone of the general conversation; serious questions require gravity; lighter subjects admit of humour and mirth. We should particularly avoid the giving occasion, by our language or manners, for others to be impressed with an ill opinion of our characters. This will surely be the case, if we undertake to traduce those who are absent; to paint them in ridiculous colours; to judge them with severity; to injure them by calumnies; and to make them appear infamous.

126. That man may be called impertinent, who considers not the circumstances of time, or engrosses the conversation, or makes himself the subject of his discourse, or pays no regard to the company he is in.

127. We should manifest a kind of regard and deference towards those with whom we converse.

128. We should manifest our respect not only for the most worthy, but towards all those who may be in our company. To disregard the opinion of others respecting us is not only arrogant, but an entire want of modesty.

129. It is the duty of youth to respect those who are advanced in age; to single out those whose conduct has merited the highest reputation, and to be guided by their counsels and authority; for the young ought to reap the advantage of the aged's experience. Above all things, licentious indulgence should be avoided, and the mind and body should be inured to exertions and patience, so as to be rendered equal to the performance of the duties of life. ("The best guide and regulator of human conduct is a fine feeling of the worth of exalted approbation in the wise and good; to be esteemed by the estimable is a most excellent standard at which to aspire.")

130. Loose manners, which are unbecoming at every period of life, appear extremely disgusting in an elderly person; but if licentiousness is also combined therewith, it is doubly shameful; for youth is contaminated and vitiated by his depravity.

131. It is pleasing to observe some good qualities of age in a young man, and some traits of youthful character in an old man.

132. Old people of kind, moderate, and liberal dispositions, enjoy a supportable decline of life; discontented and selfish tempers render every age uncomfortable.

133. What young person is so foolish as to think life certain, even for a day? Casualties are more frequent at this period than at the later periods of life; we sicken more easily, and our disorders are more acute and more critical. How few are those who arrive at old age!

134. The loss of our strength is much oftener occasioned by the vices of our youth, than by the ravages of age; it is early intemperance and licentiousness that consign to old age a worn-out constitution.

135. A debilitated frame is annoyed by whatever approaches it.

136. If pain be insupportable, it kills; if it kill not, it is supportable.

137. What a thing is the mind, changing according as the weather may be foul or fair!

138. There are disorders that deprave the senses, and cause the palate to lose its relish; so covetousness, avarice, and ambition, destroy the taste for all excellence.

139. There exists in the minds of some men, a secret energy which impels them to make attempts at distinguishing themselves.

140. To fancy that we can acquire glory and celebrity by hypocrisy, by false show, by affecting a sublime countenance, or by any artful manœuvring, is a great mistake. True merit extends its roots deeply, spreads, and increases. All false pretensions soon fall to the ground; nothing that is counterfeit can long flourish.

141. Let us examine into the nature of fame. What glory can we promise to ourselves worthy of our thirst? Let us cast our regards over the earth. Civilization occupies but a few points; the residue of the globe displays vast solitudes and barbarism. Our merits will be known but in a merely local sphere; and supposing that succeeding generations may be willing to transmit our praises to posterity, must there not happen destructive deluges, extensive conflagrations, which necessarily occasion vast revolutions? Will not these prevent, not only our fame being eternal, but its enduring for any considerable term? And, after all, what does it signify whether those, who are to be born at some future time, mention our names or not; whilst those, who went before us, never mentioned us? and they were as great in number, and doubtless of as much consequence.*

142. Of two evils, we should not only choose the least, but should endeavour still to derive some advantage even out of that.

143. To err is human, but a fool only will persist in error.

144. We discern the defects of others much sooner than our own.

145. Time, or a little water, will cleanse the stains from our persons, but neither years nor streams can remove the spots from our characters.

146. Some persons restrict themselves to the advising of such measures only as they think could be performed by themselves.

* Cicero was appointed one of the receivers general of the Roman Republic, and acted with so much vigilance and probity in his charge, that he thought Rome must be solely occupied in sounding his fame. After a year's absence, he was impatient to return and receive the applause of his fellow-citizens. He at last reached Puzzoli, and a friend who met him, asked—"How many days since he had left the city, and what news he brought?" "I return from the Provinces," answered Cicero. "What, from Africa?" demands another. A third, who wished to appear a little better informed, interrupts the last, and betrays the same ignorance. Cicero was thus made sensible how narrow the limits were of that renown after which he had aspired so ardently.

147. Reparation is sometimes made for a scandalous life by an honourable death.

148. Subserviency is the grovelling servility of a base and cringing mind, that has not the spirit to exercise a will of its own.

149. Can we call that man free over whom a capricious woman exercises an ascendancy; who submits to the sway of a tyrannizing female? She prescribes, commands, or forbids, according to the caprice of her will; he has no power to dispute her orders; he dares refuse her nothing; she demands, and he gives; she summons, and he hastens to her; she directs him to retire, and off he sneaks; she raises her voice, and he crouches and trembles. But is not such a one the most abject of slaves?

150. Disputations generally result in each opponent's expression of contempt for the other's opinions.

151. Nothing is more foolish than to be impressed with respect for any body of men collectively, each of whom, individually, we should despise.

152. Society has been established principally for the purpose of assuring to each one the preservation of his life and property. It was principally to place their possessions in security, that men became associated in communities. If then, it is indispensable to infringe in some degree upon private property, by taxation, the citizen should at least be made to comprehend that it has for its object the general good, and that they ought to submit to it as being necessary to their general interests.

153. Without order, a family, a city, a nation, mankind, nature, the infinite world could not exist.

154. He who commands must sometimes submit, and he who yields to just subordination with modesty, seems worthy to exercise authority himself at some period.

155. The domineering brutality of the master has often occasioned the ruin of the pupil.

156. To direct and enforce that which is just and useful, and which is consistent with the laws—such are the functions of magistracy. The laws guide the magistrate, and the magistrate enforces their fulfilment: and it may aptly be said, that the magistrate is a speaking law, and the law a silent magistrate.

157. It is the duty of a chief magistrate to be mindful that he represents the state; that he is appointed to sustain its credit; to maintain the laws, to distribute justice, and to preserve the rights of the citizens, which are confided to him.

158. The consequence of a man in office may receive a slight addition from the elegance of his mansion; but fine architecture cannot supply personal respect; instead of the house giving dignity to the master, the master should give distinction to the house.

159. Together with luxury and riches, there spring up in a state, avarice, pride, and insatiable ambition.

160. Those who consult the interests of one branch of society, and

neglect those of the rest, plunge a state into the most dangerous of evils—dissension and tumults.

161. If we retrace the history of the different periods of a republic, we shall find that the character of the people has always been assimilated with that of their magistrates; any change in the conduct of those in office has constantly been imitated by the public. The influence of a very few persons filling high stations, is sufficient for purifying or corrupting the manners of a state.

162. What renders more highly pernicious the corruptions of public men, is, that they are not only vicious themselves, but they spread their vices throughout the state; their own acts of turpitude are injurious, and they are still more mischievous in their contaminations; their example is even more hurtful than their personal depravity.

163. Violators of the public trust should tremble, if they have embezzled only what is sufficient for themselves; but if they have been so bold in their depredations as to get the power of dividing the spoil amongst a number, they have nothing then to fear; there is nothing so sacred but that money will obtain its violation; nothing of such force but it may be overthrown by money.

164. In bringing accusations against the executive body, nothing is more unjust than strenuously to enumerate every thing that has been done wrong, and to be entirely silent respecting what has been well done. By this means those in office may easily be rendered odious.

165. It becomes a grateful people to honour the merits of those citizens who have done great services to the state. It is the part of a firm and virtuous man not to repent of having done his duty, even though he should perceive, as the return for his benefits, preparations in train for making him suffer.

166. A statesman should vindicate himself from abuse, by redoubling his exertions for the welfare of the republic; he should disapprove the views of false friends, by refusing them his confidence, and thus evade the snares they may have laid to entrap him.

167. When punishments are to be inflicted, anger should by all means be avoided. If our temper be irritated when we have to decide the sentence against an offender, how shall we be able to draw the just line which separates excessive severity from warrantable clemency? Well would it be if judges more resembled the laws; if equity alone, and not passion, operated against the prisoner.

168. The punishment should not exceed the fault, and for similar offences, one should not be punished, and others not even summoned to justice.

169. In all capital charges, it should be ascertained what have been the general disposition and conduct of the prisoner arraigned previously; more stress should be laid on his usual habits than on a present accusation; for it is impossible to change in an instant, to adopt, all at once, a fresh course, and assume a new character at will.

170. It is repugnant to the feelings of him who possesses sensibility,

to pronounce the sentence of death on a fellow-citizen, however guilty he may be.

171. He who seduces a judge by the wiles of his eloquence, seems to be even more culpable than he who corrupts him with a bribe.

172. It is glorious for a man to endear himself to his country; to perform noble services to the community; to be the object of praise, veneration, and love; but it is odious and detestable to be the object of public fear and execration.

173. Those who are feared are hated, and it is natural to desire their destruction.

174. It is positively certain that they who design to make themselves feared, dread themselves those whom they would impress with terror.

175. Can we esteem, as belonging to the social family, the aristocratic presumer, the partisan, or sectarian man of influence, who identifies himself not with the popular cause,—with the interests of the citizens at large, but is rather adverse than friendly to the rights of the community—to the public liberties.

176. “We are afraid of drawing on ourselves enemies;” “We think ourselves unequal to the undertaking;” “We cannot spare time, or withdraw ourselves from the agreeable studies in which we are engaged:” these are the frivolous pretexts for our abandoning the individuals persecuted by base power, to their fate. Indifference, laziness, and cowardice, are the real hindrances to our making the efforts we ought for defending and rescuing the victims of corrupt and despotic government.

177. The term “peace” is agreeable; the happiness of nations consists in its enjoyment; but how different is it to subjection! Peace is the tranquil enjoyment of liberty; submission is the greatest of evils, not excepting war, or even death itself.

178. War is never allowable except when it is undertaken to secure our liberties, and to enable us to live in peace.

179. It is better to be oppressed by force in contending for a just cause, than successfully to espouse a bad one.

180. To prescribe a sacred regard for the rights of our own citizens, and pretend, at the same time, that no respect is due to those of strangers, is to dissolve that holy tie which binds together all mankind; it is to destroy, at once, all hospitality, humanity, kindness, and justice.

181. As the same plants and fruits are not produced alike in every region, so the different kinds of life do not tend to make every one act alike. In cities, dissipation prevails, and ambition begets avarice, from which springs hardened effrontery, and its offspring is crime of every degree. In country life, which is termed rustic, we are accustomed to find economy, diligence, and uprightness.

CHAPTER V.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS OF VARIOUS CHINESE AUTHORS.

1. Though countless ages pass away, and one generation of men succeeds another, how few are those who are distinguished for eminent utility!

2. What is our life? In taking a retrospect of the years that we have past, we see but a void and a blank; we seem to have been in a dream, and to have passed through a thousand different circumstances, always agitated by vain ideas, which have vanished like the airy smoke; we discern nothing but a vast sea, and an unstemmed current: it is the sea of our troubles, which is without a shore; it is the current of our desires, which is unfathomable. Man is floated on a fragile bark, constantly beaten by the winds and the waves, and leaking on every side.

3. Man's natural disposition is not vicious, but he is corrupted by example, and he is degraded and brutatized by imposed habits.

4. Our life is passed in one continual state of fear; fear of our father, of our mother, of our master, of the inclemency of the seasons, of the vicissitudes of fortune, &c.

5. The life of man is consumed in vain projects; he hopes, he toils, he agitates himself about the morrow, until at last there no longer remains for him a morrow.

6. Horror of contempt and poverty; desire for riches and aggrandisement; by these men are blinded.

7. People complain that they can nowhere find repose; they would find it easily, were their hearts but fitted for its enjoyment. Contentment is constant delight.

8. Where shall peace be found for the mind? Not in exalted fortune, not in pleasures; if these are long continued they weary us, and satiety is succeeded by surfeit. In the palaces of the great we wish for retirement; from the distractions of society we need repose. It is wisdom alone that can attach us to it the more, the more our progress in it advances.

9. To succour the unfortunate, to protect innocence, to instruct and guide erring humanity; such are the virtues that yield a man satisfaction, and render him useful to his fellow-beings.

10. The man who wishes perfectly to fulfil his duties, should study the precepts and imitate the example of the good.

11. How truly noble is he, whom neither honours nor disgrace can cause to deviate for an instant from a just and proper course.

12. The true means for preserving purity of heart is to prescribe bounds to our desires.

13. Those who are earnestly in pursuit of virtue will surely find it; but men prefer seeking after riches and honours, which depend on

others, and on favouring circumstances, and which perhaps, after all, they will never be able to obtain.

14. A very little suffices for nourishing, lodging, and clothing us ; all beyond a competence is only required to enable us to conform to the tastes of others, or to outshine them.

15. Social pleasures, in the main, are but frivolous amusements ; they have, above all, one particular inconvenience—they are not capable of being enjoyed alone ; the most simple game cannot be played without, at least, two persons ; but studies furnish useful pleasures, even in the midst of the most profound solitude.

16. To conquer ourselves, is the means for us not to be overcome by others ; to be masters of ourselves is the way not to have other masters.

17. The possession of great wealth is generally attended either by much good or much evil.

18. How often, for the indulgence of a momentary pleasure, is wasted what would relieve hundreds of the destitute from their sufferings !

19. A small relief, given opportunely and in extreme need, does more good than a hundred ill-bestowed gratuities.

20. “ Wait till I shall possess a superfluity, and I will then relieve the necessitous.” Ah, wretch ! thou wilt never relieve them.

21. There is no weapon more dangerous to man than his own cupidity ; no better defence for him than moderation.

22. We regard with an envious eye the riches of others, but these vain desires do not enrich us ; would it not be better to fortify our hearts against this silly covetousness ? We nourish the wish to injure our enemy, but he is not affected by our impotent spite ; would it not be better to pardon him in sincerity ?

23. Rich enough already, we are fully occupied with the thoughts of augmenting our wealth. For whom ? For our children ? We should reflect that we are preparing, perhaps, their destruction. Great riches are more troublesome than serviceable to a virtuous man, because they engross his attention.

24. The speculator sometimes meets with great success, but he is subject to serious disasters ; the upright and unambitious man seldom makes a large fortune, but he suffers no dread of reverses.

25. Some repine because they are not rich enough ; and let them repine, if they are incapable of being satisfied with necessities.

26. He is truly rich who knows how to make his expenses conform to his income.

27. To grow old, to be sick, and to die—these are the necessary accidents of life ; riches are no protection against them, but rather occasion our frequently growing aged prematurely, our being oftener sick, and death happening to us the sooner.

28. The debtor complains of the hard-heartedness of his creditor ; does he become the lender ? He is himself still more obdurate.

29. Our success depends on our frugality and moderation; improvidence and luxury lead to ruin, and plunge men into all the horrors of misery.

30. Indigence and obscurity produce vigilance and economy, and from these virtues spring riches and honours; honours and riches beget luxury and pride; these are accompanied by dissipation and laziness, which very soon reconduct to former misery.

31. Uninterrupted prosperity produces negligence and pride.

32. Pain, pleasure, joy, and sorrow, have no fixed point beyond which they can go no farther. There have been those who have been ready to die with joy on their first appointment to fill an humble office; they have been afterwards raised to higher employments, and have died of grief at last, because they could not arrive at the chief dignity of all.

33. A man's powers are very circumscribed, and his triumph is always of short duration; never will he be able to secure the approbation of every one; never will it be possible for him to silence the voice of censure; never can he stifle the reproaches of his own conscience.

34. If I receive a visit from a man of quality, my vanity is flattered. Why so? Are any of his dignities, his grandeur, and riches, transferred to me? If I am rich myself, I am mortified when I am obliged to receive an inferior. This, too, is ridiculous. Does he deprive me of any part of my respectability? Am I contaminated by his misfortunes?

35. The presence of a great man imposes upon us; with downcast looks we stand abashed before him; but, if we consider what he is, why then should we be thus confused?

36. The highest order of intellect is wise and virtuous, independently of instruction; by its own powers it discerns what is right and fit, and penetrates to the remoter motives of action; the middling class is so after instruction—it is willing to learn, and can discern good and evil when pointed out; the lowest grade is vicious in spite of discipline—it has neither acuteness nor docility—is ignorant of the way itself, and will not submit to be led in it by others.

37. If we would reach a high point of attainment, we must persevere constantly, and never fix for ourselves any limits to our acquirements.

38. In instructing others we improve ourselves; he who is engaged in the tuition of others acquires a proficiency in his attainments, of which he was not previously conscious.

39. Too much merit is conceded to the learned pedant; engaged in sterile and minute studies, he is, in fact, out of the line of all useful attainments.

40. Feel neither aversion nor disdain toward those whose minds are deficient; expect not men to be perfect in all respects.

41. Contempt discourages men, and weakens their virtue.

42. It is easy to reprehend what is wrong in others; the difficulty

is in paying regard to another's advice to and reproof of ourselves, without letting them pass off like the flowing stream.

43. To conceal the faults of others, and publish their virtues; this discovers an amiable character; this is the way to make ourselves beloved.

44. When we hear evil respecting others, we believe it; when we hear good, we doubt it; when we accustom ourselves to observe the faults of others, we no longer pay attention to their excellencies; we should never believe evil of any one without positive proof.

45. A civil man neither despises nor insults any one; the moderate man, who is content with what he possesses, wrongs no one.

46. Man is only distinguished from the other animals by his superior faculties of intelligence.

47. Be your own reprover for the faults you have committed, and use your endeavours to become more virtuous.

48. Think before you act, and engage in nothing without first taking into consideration all the relative circumstances.

49. The virtues we have are reduced to nought, if we think that they are sufficient; and we forfeit the merit of our good actions by boasting of them ourselves.

50. To speak little and think much, this is the way to acquire good sense.

51. If we doubt the justice of an action, we ought to abstain from doing it.

52. Let the crafty and wicked cease to boast the depths of their arts; who knows but detection may unexpectedly overtake them?

53. Finding a lost sum of money, the owner of which we know; surprising a lovely woman alone in a private apartment; hearing the cries of our bitterest enemy about to perish inevitably, if we decline to render our assistance; what complete tests of our virtue are these cases!

54. It requires much virtue to be able to live with those who are destitute of any.

55. He whom we love has no faults; if we come to hate him, he then has no virtues.

56. There is a very dangerous and malignant sort of people; the praise of talents and of virtue excites their spleen.

57. Detraction has ever been the portion of superior men; but the impotent sarcasms of the envious cannot deprive the man of genius either of his repose or his glory. Can we be deprived of our virtue by the opinion of others?

58. Deceit has never been known to maintain itself long against sincerity and honesty.

59. Certain persons chime in with our sentiments even before we have expressed them; they fear something may escape our observation, and they are in haste to apprise us; these are dangerous people, and we ought to suspect such complaisance.

60. Never confide in him who says "no" and "yes" in the same breath.

61. He who makes inconsiderate promises is often obliged to disregard them, and thus renders himself unworthy of our dependance.

62. Secrecy is the soul of enterprise. An ancient wrote the memorandum of his plans on the sand; the wind blew, and not a trace of them was left.

63. Those who praise me, at the same time dictate to me the course I ought to pursue; those who blame me, are ready with their cautions against the dangers I ought to shun.

64. Very pure water has no fishes in it; the man who is too clear-sighted has but few acquaintances.

65. To start questions which require serious reflection, in the midst of gaiety, rejoicings, and parties of pleasure; to study for effect in the display of our talents or erudition, instead of yielding to the general hilarity, is to render ourselves obnoxious, and to impress on others a bad opinion of our politeness.

66. We pass from pleasantry to jesting; from jesting we become satirical; and this leads to railing and impertinence; this play of the wits too often terminates in irremediable animosities.

67. Bantering always leads to unpleasantness; and a free talker is never without enemies.

68. We blush for what we have done and said under the effects of wine; we run no less danger when our passions are excited.

69. Instead of searching to discover the best remedies for disorders, it would be wiser to apply ourselves to the means of preserving our health.

70. From the hot and acrid humours of the blood springs a courage that is mechanical and ill-regulated; true courage is directed by reason; in every affair, to act with composure is the true character of courage.

71. In contesting the disputed title to a foot of land, the proceedings have often cost what would have purchased acres.

72. Treat strangers with civility; yield your confidence to those who are worthy; and break off all connexion with corrupt individuals.

73. Write not while anger lasts; a stroke of the pen is often more fatal than a stab with a dagger.

74. A father of a family should strive to keep his fortune good, but he should avoid extreme solicitude on that account.

75. The way to enjoy domestic comfort is to correct what is wrong in one's family with a mild firmness; and by overlooking what is offensive in our neighbours, we shall be enabled to live on a friendly footing with them.

76. If we have never had children, we are unacquainted with the cares and anxieties of a parent; we should never make light of those duties in which we are inexperienced.

77. The duty of a father is to correct the faults of his children; the mother's disposition is to excuse them; the father should correct

them, but not too harshly; the mother ought to feel for their weakness, without too much connivance.

78. If your son has no intercourse, except with those whose language is good, it is impossible that he should contract a bad habit of speaking; if he is witness to none but virtuous conduct, he cannot plunge himself into vice.

79. It is rarely that the magistrate is disobeyed by one who has ever been accustomed to filial submission.

80. From the aged we should not exact a complaisance that is troublesome; neither from those who are in narrow circumstances, should we receive services that might put them to expense.

81. The burdens of life are borne more easily when we mutually assist each other.

82. We think the ancients were in darkness, only because we see them through the thick clouds from which we have ourselves emerged.

CHAPTER VI.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL MAXIMS AND PRECEPTS OF CONFUCIUS.

1. In order to arrive at the perfection of our nature, we must be born again; our new birth consists in ridding ourselves of prejudices, so as for us to be exempt from error, either on the part of our passions or our reason.

2. The sovereign good consists in an entire conformity with correct reason, both in our opinions and our propensities.

3. We should let our reason, and not our passions, be the rule of our conduct; for reason will lead us to think correctly, to speak sensibly, and to act justly.

4. Correctness of judgment determines us towards truth, and inclines us to yield to whatever is consistent with reason.

5. Those who prize truth, and constantly make it their object of pursuit—who seek to discover their errors, and are bent on correcting them—are rightly called philosophers. Those individuals, who have satisfactorily acquainted themselves with truth, cannot be better employed than in serving the public, by imparting the treasures of their knowledge to others.

6. We should begin by instructing ourselves, and perfecting our reasonable nature, so as to arrive at that clearness of judgment which had been weakened and obscured by various passions, and then we may be capacitated for attempting the improvement of others. To this end it is necessary to have a deep insight into the nature of things, and to understand both good and evil; to preserve integrity of heart, and to regulate our whole conduct according to reason

When a man has thus reformed himself, there will be less difficulty in his reforming others.

7. Our duty towards our intellect is to raise it to as high a point of knowledge as is possible, so as to attain the highest degree of confidence in relying on our own judgment.

8. To pin our faith on another man's sleeve, and submit to be led by authority, deprives us of independence, and subjects us to just contempt.

9. In aiming at excellence, we should interest ourselves in whatever may tend to the discovery of the truth; we should endeavour to free ourselves from doubt, so as to supply conviction to our minds; we should discriminate between reality and fiction, and should act with resolution in adopting those opinions which we ascertain to be just.

10. He who would attain to a proper self-confidence, must regard nothing that is contrary to reason; must listen to nothing that clashes with reason; must avoid every expression inconsistent with reason, and yield to no notion by which reason is outraged.

11. Those extravagant systems which men fabricate; those soaring notions which cannot be sustained; those unnatural dogmas which clash with the experience of every class in society—ought never to be admitted as of weight, because they are contrary to reason.

12. Close your ears, persist in silence, and support continual solitude, rather than conform to, and yield your attendance on formalities and ceremonies that do violence to reason.

13. No regard should be paid by us to pretended supernatural authorities; and we should not desire to derive advantage from imposing on the ignorance of the people.

14. Whatever offers itself to our observation, we should consider it in every point of view; mark, learn, and inwardly digest it; and in all that relates to science, we should reject whatever is uncertain or doubtful.

15. No man can possess knowledge of every kind, but every one ought to learn and know what pertains to his duty.

16. We should be satisfied with knowing and doing what is generally suitable to be known and done. Our ideas of virtue should not be too visionary and transcendent, nor incompatible with practice; we should neither affect impossibilities, nor require more than is reconcilable with nature.

17. Those pretended sages, whose vanity leads them to affect a knowledge of what is beyond comprehension, adopt a part in which they are sure to miscarry.

18. Merely a professed love of truth, without pains taken to inform ourselves what it is, can only leave our minds in uncertainty and perplexity.

19. The faculty of the passions is natural to man, or, rather, it is nature itself; there is a constant tendency to their being produced by circumstances; but the wise man regulates his passions by those

restraints which are also furnished him by nature, inasmuch as they are the principles of reason.

20. Without the faculty of meditating, we shall be likely to stray into the maze of error, and become bewildered; we shall attain to no steady principles, and our knowledge will never be free from darkness and doubt; on the other hand, meditation alone will lead us to follow shadows, and we shall experience no solid convictions: act, but without neglecting to meditate; meditate, but without omitting to act.

21. Profoundly buried in our hearts, the emotions of the mind can only be known to those of us by whom they are experienced.

22. All immoderate passions are deviations from that continence which is the great rule of living.

23. True virtue consists in improving the mind, and in purifying the heart; in bearing good-will towards mankind, and in engaging them to love truth and moral excellence.

24. The just mean, in which virtue consists, is always the object of the wise; a wise man will not stop short of this point, but he never goes beyond it. The rule of the universal mean is natural; it is born with us.

25. A prudent man will always preserve the medium, but a foolish one is almost sure to go above or below it; the vulgar seldom observe it, and the cause thereof is, some think themselves too wise, and others think themselves not wise enough.

26. A prudent man will accomodate himself to his circumstances; if he is rich, he will not give himself up to luxury and inordinate pleasures, nor offend others by his pride and arrogance; if he is poor, he will still be honest.

27. A prudent man is cautious both in what he says and what he does; and the fruit of his wisdom is, that, in time, he brings himself to say and do nothing which he would not wish to be heard and known.

28. A prudent man will agree in opinion with every one so far as is consistent with reason, but he will not yield his opinions for the sake of conforming with, and pleasing the vulgar; a foolish or unprincipled man will identify himself with the multitude, without choice or selection of his own, so that he will neither be consistent with reason nor with justice.

29. I have met with many men who were but ill-adapted for the sciences; but I have never met with any one who was by nature incapacitated for being virtuous.

30. Whatsoever is both honest and advantageous is proper and becoming, and we are attached to virtue because it includes both these qualities. Virtue is an ornament that sets off the whole person of him who possesses it—his interior and his exterior; to the mind it communicates inexpressible beauties and perfections; to the body it produces delightful sensations; it affords a certain physiognomy, certain emotions, certain manners, which are infinitely agreeable; and

as it is the property of virtue to calm the heart, and preserve peace there, so this inward tranquillity and secret joy produce a certain serenity in the countenance, an air of goodness, kindness, and considerateness, which attracts every one's esteem.

31. He who possesses virtue will always sufficiently recommend himself to others by his countenance; but he who speaks well of virtue will not always be found to possess it.

32. We cannot observe the necessary rules of life if there be wanting these three virtues—considerateness, which enables us to distinguish good from evil; universal benevolence, which inclines us to love all men that are virtuous; and resolution, constantly to persevere in our adherence to good, and avoidance of evil.

33. He who applies himself to virtue ought to be on his guard against three things—against love in his youth, when his blood boils in his veins, and his spirits flow with impetuosity; against disputes and ambitious strifes in his riper years, when his personal force is at maturity; and against avarice in his old age, when his strength is enervated and his mind impaired.

34. Let us be unremitting in our endeavours to acquire new virtues, and never be satisfied merely with those we may already have attained.

35. No man should torment himself because the world is not apprised of his virtues and his talents; let him rather feel mortified if he knows not the world, and is mistaken in those things which he ought to embrace or reject.

36. If a good man is poor, humble, and despised, yet he will permit himself in nothing that is improper, in order to be relieved from this situation.

37. Born in a low condition, and brought up in humiliation, adversity has been my instructor, and much have I learnt therefrom.

38. O thou, who art the friend of goodness, if thy talents and virtues remain buried in obscurity; if thou art noticed by none, but neglected by all the world, afflict not thyself on account of their indifference, nor feel indignant at their desertion; if thou art satisfied with thy own conduct, content with what thou possessest, and regardless about that which depends upon the opinion of others, and not on thyself, then thou art approaching the height of excellence, and art affixing the last seal to thy perfections.

39. To relinquish the world and its honours, to be excluded from society, and not to be known amongst men; yet to feel no sad impressions or repinings on account of so great an obscurity, and never to repent of having resigned ourselves to it—this extraordinary character can only be experienced by privileged minds.

40. The erudite scholar, who applies himself to literature, and who blushes at wearing an inferior coat, or to be seen partaking of a mean repast, does not merit that he should be named as a philosopher.

41. To find one's self in coarse and shabby trim, and not blush on

coming into the presence of a well-dressed friend, displays a strength of mind rarely to be met with.

42. It is only by unwearied attention, and by unremitting efforts, that we can keep in the strict line of duty, which, nevertheless, may be distinguished at the slightest glance.

43. If we perceived not at once what is unjust and shameful, how could we be able to guard against mistakes in practice.

44. The wise man seeks for the cause of his errors in himself; the fool, excusing himself, seeks for it in others.

45. Strive to be pure in thought: if our mind is free from evil, our actions will be so also; let us never intend, much less commit, a wrong act.

46. Does any thing improper offer itself to the eye, see it not; does it strike the ear, hear it not; is it on our tongue, speak it not.

47. Sincerity of heart is the first of virtues; nothing is so indispensable in the commerce of society as sincerity.

48. In the midst of candour, and while we are incapable of any dissimulation—if we are not well acquainted with the world, it may happen, through our own simplicity and the guile of others, that we fall into a thousand embarrassments, to extract ourselves from which will be found very difficult; it is necessary then to combine a knowledge of the ways of the world with an entirely harmless disposition on our own part.

49. We can only acquire the management of our will by extending and perfecting our knowledge, as far as is admitted by humanity, reason, and the nature of the world.

50. We should behave ourselves at all times towards others the same as we would wish their conduct to be towards ourselves.

51. He who sincerely and truly measures others by himself, obeys that law naturally imprinted in his bosom, which dictates to him, not to do to others what he would not they should do to him; and whatsoever things he would that men should do to him, to do even the same to them.

52. Is there any one maxim by which a man may regulate his whole life? It is simply to act towards others as we would desire they should act towards us; we need but this rule alone; it is the foundation and principle of all our duties.

53. Let us, then, regard our neighbour as ourselves; let us use the same standard, in judging ourselves, as that by which we judge others, and estimate their sufferings and enjoyments according to our own; so shall we fulfil the laws of true charity.

54. Have we, in any manner, done wrong to another? Let us not be backward in making reparation for it; not hesitating an instant, but nobly breaking through the restraints of pride and shame that would be our hindrance.

55. Return a good deed by the like; but never revenge an injury.

56. To return good for evil, and not to resent injuries, can only be the act of a great mind.

57. We should abhor the crimes of the wicked ; but, if they are reclaimed to virtue, we should receive them to our bosoms as though they had never erred.

58. We ought to be so far indulgent and liberal as to overlook the offences of others when they show signs of true repentance ; our deportment should then be such as to relieve them from an uneasy sense of their former conduct ; that so they may lose sight of the disgrace and degradation which can now only have the effect to discourage them in their adherence to a more virtuous course of life.

59. If we have fallen into errors, we should recollect that it is possible to retrieve our characters ; we have but to break asunder the ties which attach us to guilt, and then we may be able to surmount the obstacles that prevent us from regaining the path of virtue.

60. Nothing is more ridiculous than blaming the faults of others when we exhibit the same faults ourselves.

61. We should cultivate peace and good-will towards all men ; but we should form intimate connexions alone with those of wisdom and probity.

62. Never make a friend of a worse man than yourself, but of him who is wiser and better.

63. We should mildly caution our erring friend, and reconduct him into the right path ; but, if our remonstrances prove useless, and we find that he is obstinately bent on his own destruction, then it is right to abandon him, and not render ourselves ridiculous by a vain importunity.

64. Could remonstrances rectify faults that have been already committed, then silence would be criminal ; but nothing is colder than the advice by which it is impossible to profit.

65. Three friends are useful to us—a candid friend, a faithful friend, and a friend who will listen to what we say, who will consider of what is said to him, and who speaks little, but to the purpose. Also, three are pernicious : the hypocrite, the flatterer, and the great talker.

66. For the well regulating of our family, it is first necessary that we should well regulate ourselves.

67. To maintain love and concord in one's family, to cause virtue to prevail amongst those who are subject to our control ; this is to govern to some purpose—this is to exercise a useful and honourable magistracy.

68. An amiable woman is the source of satisfaction and happiness to her family.

69. By the manners of the children we may judge of the temper of the mother.

70. We should eat, without yielding ourselves up to the indulgence of the appetite ; live, without caring about the luxuries of refinement ; act with caution ; speak with prudence ; and not applaud ourselves.

71. From all we hear, we should make a prudent selection ; should preserve silence respecting what we think doubtful, and even be cir-

cumspect with regard to that which we think certain : thus, we shall seldom err in what we say.

72. It is difficult to act well ; can it be easy, then, to speak well in haste and without reflection ?

73. The tongue is the index of the heart ; and what the latter harbours the former cannot always conceal.

74. When a person's discourse seems studied for effect, and is, in all respects, flattering, it is then we may suspect his sincerity.

75. Beware of the mouth that is dangerously eloquent, and practised in the specious arts of dissembling and flattering.

76. We should be careful how we conduct ourselves in our own dwellings, and should do nothing at home for which we might blush were it known abroad.

77. We should never affirm what we do not know to be fact ; and never undertake to do a thing of which we have not well considered the consequences.

78. Unaffected manners should be accompanied by simplicity of dress and ornament.

79. When beauty and exterior grace are combined in happy union, together with native candour ; when, without excess or deficiency, these set off each other in agreeable variation, thence result the perfections of a polished man.

80. Preserve a calm and serene countenance ; nothing will conciliate more powerfully the hearts of others towards you.

81. Equals should place confidence in each other.

82. The sordid mind is wrapped up in self ; it is capable of none but interested affections ; it, in some measure, makes a profit of friendship ; calculating in all its motives, it does not perform good—it sells it.

83. There are persons who are beneath our conversation ; if we conversed with them, our words would be lost.

84. Act in no way that is unhandsome, even though you should have art enough to make your conduct approved ; the eyes of men may be easily deceived for a time, but a knave will always be in danger of detection.

85. To what purpose are attempts at dissimulation ? For that which a man is in himself, that he will in the end appear to other people.

86. Long experience is required to know mankind. When young, I thought that every word a person said accorded with the sentiment of his heart. But now I am sensible of my mistake, and before giving credit to words, I wait to find them confirmed by actions.

87. An honest heart makes an open countenance.

88. What is that base man good for, whose language is deception, and who is ever wanting in his engagements.

89. A bad man is hateful ; but, if he perceives that he is hated he becomes still more dangerous.

90. A man of studied words and smooth countenance is seldom an honest man.

91. It is difficult to distinguish the worthy from the worthless. Nevertheless, we should observe our man, consider how he acts, and what he meditates; push still farther our investigation, and penetrate his aim, and ascertain the end he purposes to obtain; if we suspect an intention to deceive us, we should not stop here, but mark the taste and inclination of him who wishes to be deemed good; if he appears to be sincere and upright, but, at the same time, seems to act constrainedly; if the source of his pleasures and his happiness are proved not to be derived alone from the purity of his actions; then we must not view his professions as sterling, but always suspect that his honesty may be of short duration.

92. But we should not, without good reasons, thus intensely scrutinize the hearts of men; to be strict in criticising ourselves, but to view others with indulgence—this is the way to avoid ill-will.

93. The solid, upright, and sincere man, who weighs the expressions of himself and others; who adheres to his duty, and never swerves from what is just; who watches the countenances and manner of those who address him, and adopts not their opinions without reflection; such is the man I call prudent.

94. Promises ought not lightly to be retracted; we should see well that what we promise is just, and that it can be completed.

95. What we do should be done with a good will.

96. Perform your promise if it be not contrary to equity, for justice is before every promise.

97. If we undertake to conduct an affair for another, we should attend to it with the same application and strictness as if it were our own concern.

98. Eschew vanity and pride. Even though you exhibit all the knowledge and ability of the ancients, if humility be wanting, and you are wanting in charity, you have attained to nought, and you are placed in the lowest scale of moral gradation.

99. Great riches are attended by great cares; a large family, by numerous solitudes; and a long life by protracted sufferings.

100. In our opportunities for enriching ourselves we should never lose sight of honesty.

101. Those who are determined on rising in the world will stick at nothing that is mean, base, and contemptible, provided only that it may further their purposes.

102. An avaricious man cannot see the fertility of his own fields.

103. Perseverance may make but a slow progress, but it slackens not its efforts in whatever it undertakes, and in the end it is successful.

104. He who is ever in action, but never reflects, will in the end lose his pains; whoever is always meditating, but never acts, will also find himself in the back ground.

105. To make much of little things, and little of great things, is neither consistent with reason nor prudence.

106. It is difficult to get along with people of contracted minds and small attainments ; when noticed, they become familiar and presumptuous ; and, if we pay them but little attention, they then complain that we slight them, and we incur their animosity.

107. Age should be respected, and those who suffer under infirmity or poverty should be relieved and supported.

108. The defects of parents ought never to be visited on their children. If a father, by his faults, renders himself unworthy of respect, the son ought not to be despised, if he do not render himself personally odious.

109. The father's folly and misconduct cannot justly affect the merits of his son, nor deprive him of respect.

110. A child is in duty bound to love and obey his parents ; but, if they permit themselves in any shameful faults, they ought to be made acquainted therewith ; but it ought to be done with modesty and affectionate deference ; and if, whatever precaution be observed, a harsh repulse is met with, the child should preserve silence for a time, but not entirely desist ; counsels given to parents may draw antipathy and severity upon the child ; but, in this instance, they should be borne without murmuring.

111. Justice, and not valour, merits the first place in our esteem.

112. Brutal courage leads to insolence and bullying.

113. Firmness, if not wisely tempered, degenerates into perverse obstinacy.

114. Of what use is an extraordinary talent in speaking ? To oppress others with a sense of our superior eloquence is only to make for ourselves enemies.

115. Despise that studied eloquence by which the ears are charmed ; that complacent and deceptive smile by which he is flattered who is to be gained over, and that excessive politeness which is calculated to bespeak your good opinion ; they are the arts of perfidious and unprincipled men, who say whatever they think may serve their purpose, without the least regard for truth.

116. Let our speech be intelligible, and let that be sufficient.

117. In early ages, men studied for the sake of their own improvement ; they sought after knowledge in order to arrive at wisdom ; the object of study at the present day is to shine in the eyes of others, and to obtain honours, riches, and vain applause.

118. Every injury done to an individual is an offence committed against the community. As far as justice requires, let injuries be punished.

119. It is well to terminate a lawsuit speedily ; but it would have been better had it never been commenced.

120. Being admonished of a fault, he observed, " How fortunate am I to meet with a person who will correct me ! "

121. Being in the company of working men, " I would, " said he,

“willingly become a working man myself, and learn some trade, though it might be deemed low; well knowing that nothing can be low which is useful to the public.”

122. Offended by being called wise, he remarked, “I only appear wise to those who are not so.”

CHAPTER VII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS OF DEMOCRATES.

1. Life is transient; the world is a spectacle; we enter, we look on, the scene closes; all is over.

2. Not personal advantages, nor all those of fortune, procure happiness; it alone can be found in uprightness and integrity.

3. He is happy who combines a sound judgment with the gifts of fortune.

4. The good are distinguished from the bad, not only by their actions, but also by their minds.

5. There are some happy characters who, without studying to acquire good sense, act conformably thereto all their lives.

6. Proper conduct, and not fine words, does honour to virtue.

7. We should refrain from doing wrong, not through fear, but because it is our duty.

8. Fools are not taught by reason; adversity must instruct them; a simpleton has sometimes been known to become wise in misfortune.

9. There remains one sweet consolation to the unfortunate, provided they have done their duty.

10. You have committed a base act; be yourself the first to blush for it; he who repents for having done wrong is not yet lost to virtue.

11. Many words are not required from us; it is only desired that we should state the fact.

12. It is an offensive presumption to wish to prate on every subject, and be willing to listen to nothing said by others.

13. People who delight in contradiction, and who busy themselves about every thing, suffer one disadvantage—that is, they are thoroughly conversant with no one subject that is really useful.

14. Is it not scandalous to seek to dive into the affairs of others, and yet not to be acquainted with our own?

15. He who is continually deferring it will never complete his purpose.

16. Those who are constantly complaining will never retain their friends long.

17. Before accepting a favour, we should reflect well on the mode by which we can show our gratitude.

18. How often may charity be exercised at a little cost! A

trifling benefit, granted in season, may sometimes save the honour, or the life, perhaps, of him on whom it is bestowed.

19. Watch the bad closely, lest they seize an opportunity to do you an injury.

20. It is right to oppose and counteract the designs of an unjust man; if we have it not in our power to do so, we can at least refuse to become his accomplice.

21. All is lost when the wicked serve for example, and the good are objects of derision.

CHAPTER VIII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL SENTIMENTS OF DEMOCRITUS.

1. In the infinite space there are innumerable worlds, or material globes, each subject to the force of a general action that effects changes in all particular bodies.

2. Nothing has ever been produced from nonentity, nor can the constituent material of any thing that exists ever be annihilated.

3. Universal motion or existence must necessarily be eternal existence.

4. The natural motion or order had not any beginning, but is eternal.

5. The mind has no conception of anything but what it received by impressions from surrounding objects; that is to say, there is nothing in the understanding but what is derived through the use of the senses.

6. Many men, not understanding the nature of moral dissolution, are miserably distracted with fears,—fancying and feigning to themselves wondrous things, as if they would be in a predicament after their deaths.

7. The end of all our moral attainments is tranquillity of mind.

8. To be happy it is necessary that the mind be perfectly at ease, in such manner that, being constantly satisfied, it may neither be troubled by fears, superstition, nor any other passion.

9. Satisfaction of mind, to be permanent, is not to be derived from frail and transitory pleasures; the only mode by which it can be enjoyed is to dispense with melancholy, and avoid thinking of sad and afflicting subjects.

10. There is no occasion for our being concerned about the future, but it is wise to consult for present enjoyment, without embarrassing ourselves with responsibilities; for he who would live constantly happy, should restrict his attention to that which affects himself, or at least not undertake anything but what he can agreeably perform.

11. Tranquillity, or peace of mind, which is also called wisdom, is a thing so desirable, that its value is beyond all estimate; possessing

it, we wonder at nothing, we fear nothing, and we enjoy everything ; for, when we know how properly to frame our manners, order our actions, and moderate our desires, we are continually happy.

12. Profligacy, or vicious indulgence in sensuality, depraves the very talents which nature has not denied us.

13. It is well not to forget that there is nothing improper in nature, and that what seems to be so is the fault of bad education and misrule.

14. Temperance augments enjoyment.

15. The worst disease of the mind is insatiate avarice.

16. A prudent use of wealth conduces to the practice of liberality, and ensures the means for relieving others ; he who parts with his money foolishly, makes it the prey of every one.

17. A cheerful man is happy, though he possess but little ; a peevish man is uncomfortable in the midst of affluence.

18. Poverty and riches are truly the names of want and sufficiency : he who wants, ought not to be called rich ; nor he who wants not, poor.

19. He who enjoys what he has, without regretting the want of what he has not, is a happy man.

20. A good man cares not for the abuse of bad men.

21. We had better blame our own faults than those of others.

22. It is the office of prudence to avoid being injured, if possible ; but after an injury has been received, a regard for our own tranquillity will preserve us from a desire of revenge.

23. To praise the deserving is well ; but to praise what is ill, is the part of a deceitful person.

24. 'Tis easy to praise, or to blame, when we ought not ; but both are signs of a depraved disposition.

25. Those who commit acts that deserve punishment, ought to suffer the consequences.

26. He who happens to have a good son-in-law has found a child ; he who has a bad one has lost a daughter.

27. The galaxy, or milky way, is occasioned by the combined light of a multitude of stars.

28. He laughed at the folly and vanity of mankind, who are distracted by conflicting cares, and are at once the prey to hope and anxiety.

29. He taught his disciples that the mind terminated with the decease of the body ; and, therefore, that they should give no credit to the pretended existence of spirits or souls ; he entirely rejected the notion of deity.

30. Lucan says that Democritus appeared undaunted, because he was fully persuaded that the senses, or mind, ceased with the discontinuance of the faculties of the body.

31. While sitting at his midnight lamp, busily engaged in writing, he was suddenly intruded on by several young men, who, thinking to terrify him, had clothed themselves in black garments, and put on

masks, pretending to be ghosts ; but he coolly requested them not to play the fool, and went on with his studies.

32. He told Darius, who, after the loss of his wife, was inconsolable, that he would raise her from the dead, if he could produce three persons who had gone through life without suffering adversity ; and the king's sorrow was, in some manner, soothed by his unavailing inquiries to find such persons.

CHAPTER IX

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL PRECEPTS, &C. OF DEMOPHILES.

1. It is in the bosom of temperance that the mind collects all its forces ; it is when the passions are calm that we can view things in their just light.

2. Do that which you think right, without being influenced by the expectation of praise : forget not that the vulgar are bad judges of the credit that should be given to actions.

3. It is the acquisition of no contemptible science, to know how to bear with the ignorance of fools.

4. Make no account either of a fool's contempt or of his praises ; view his whole life as of no account.

5. Confide in the conduct of a man, and not in his words ; we every where find people acting ill, and talking well.

6. It is much more useful to commune with ourselves than to converse with others.

7. In prosperity the prudent man provides resources against adversity.

8. There are no real possessions but those of the mind ; these can be imparted without diminishing them ; they are even increased by communicating them.

9. It will not be long before the injuries thou hast done to others will recoil on thyself.

10. Falshood cannot long be sustained ; it deceives but for an instant.

11. The mischievous man, justly tormented by the consciousness of his crimes, carries his punishment in his own bosom.

12. Esteem the stranger who is just, more than thy nearest relative who regards not justice.

13. It is with young persons as with plants ; by the first fruits that are borne we may know what to expect in future.

CHAPTER X.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MAXIMS OF DIOGENES.

1. The end of life is a just use of our reason in the perception of natural ideas, and in the rejection of unnatural notions.

2. The end of philosophy is to subdue the passions, and to qualify us for every condition of life: no event can happen for which the philosopher is not prepared.

3. Liberty is the greatest good, and the foundation of all the rest.

4. The abject and stupid are slaves even under a democracy; the sage is free, though bound in chains.

5. Covetousness is the metropolis of all the vices.

6. Nothing can be accomplished without labour, and with it nothing is too difficult.

7. When we stretch forth our hand to a friend we should never clutch our fist.

8. Strength of mind, as well as physical force, is chiefly to be acquired by exercise and habit.

9. Our passions grow the more intense by indulgence.

10. Against passion we must oppose reason.

11. Even the contempt of pleasure may, by the force of habit, become pleasant.

12. Difference of rank in society originate from the vices and follies of mankind, and are, therefore, to be despised.

13. An inordinate affectation of gravity, in a man's manners, may have the effect to impose upon some, and exact a kind of respect; but such ill-mannered men are always disliked.

14. No state of life can be more miserable than that of a completely destitute old man.

15. Those persons who are alarmed by their dreams, do not heed nor feel any concern about what they do while they are awake; but they disquiet themselves much, and their greatest business is about the fancies of their discomposed brains during unsound sleep.

16. How can death be an evil, as it is never felt when it is death?

17. Would you be avenged of your enemy—be virtuous, that he may have nothing to say against you.

18. To one who reviled him he said—"No one will believe you when you speak ill of me, any more than they would believe me if I were to speak well of you."

19. Seeing a young man blush, "Take courage," said he, "for that is the colour of virtue."

20. He said, "when he looked upon seamen, men of physical science, and philosophers, that man was the wisest of all beings; but when he looked upon priests, prophets, interpreters of dreams, or persons inflated with self-consequence, then, that nothing was so contemptible as man."

21. Accosting one who had just undergone the ordinance or rite of sprinkling with water, or baptism, and who affected much sanctimoniousness on the occasion,—“Dost thou not know,” said he, “that the errors of life are no more to be washed away with water than errors of grammar?”

22. Seeing a woman lying prostrate on the ground in prayer, and being desirous of reproving her superstition,—“How now,” said he, “are you not ashamed that your God should see you in this unbecoming posture?”

23. When in the temple of Neptune, the pictures of those who had escaped from shipwreck were pointed out to him, and he was asked if he thought it folly to invoke the God in a tempest? “Where,” demanded he, “are the portraits of those who were drowned?”

24. He did not spare the vices of the rich and powerful, and he ridiculed the religious superstitions of the age, which gave great offence; and the consequence was, that he suffered much obloquy, and was made the subject of ludicrous and disgraceful calumny.

25. Diogenes readily admitted that he had exhibited some extravagance in his philosophy:—“I have acted,” said he, “like the leader of a band, who pitches his key-note a little too high, in order to prevent others from being too low.”

CHAPTER XI.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MANUAL OF EPICTETUS.

1. Death is not an evil; it is the idea we have of it which makes the word so terrible.

2. Expect not that events should conform to thy desires; but reconcile thy desires to events; this is the way to be happy.

3. Men are harrassed, not by things themselves, but by their opinions respecting things.

4. Dost thou wish that thy desires should always be gratified? Form none but what it depends on thyself to satisfy.

5. Wouldst thou be truly free? Expect nothing from others; neither be concerned for aught that depends on others, unless thou wouldst necessarily be held in trammels.

6. Content thyself with desiring nothing, nor apprehending any thing,—with moderation, prudence, and self-command.

7. To die at once, by starvation, exempt from fear and mortification, would be preferable to living in abundance, if we were surrounded by continual terrors.

8. Make use of those things which are necessary, such as eating, drinking, clothing, houses, servants, &c., only to the extent required

by thy simple wants ; and set thy face against every thing that savours of ostentation or luxury.

9. Our personal wants ought to be the measure of our riches ; by reducing the former within bounds, we shall always be able to preserve a just mean.

10. Be not nice about being seen while engaged in doing a thing thou hast judged it proper to do, although people may represent it in a false light.

11. Henceforth prescribe for thyself a fixed rule ; a certain and constant character, which shall serve thee as a law, and from which thou wilt never deviate, whether thou shouldst be in the midst of society, or alone in privacy.

12. A sure sign of stupidity is to be concerned much about one's person ; our chief attention should be given to the improvement of our minds.

13. In conversing with thy friends, refrain from speaking incessantly of thy own exploits, and of the dangers thou hast encountered ; for though thou mayest feel a pleasure in recounting them, none will be felt by others in listening to thy accounts of thyself.

14. Avoid contention, particularly in convivial parties.

15. In general, speak but little ; say no more than is necessary, and that in few words.

16. We shall speak but seldom, if only when there is occasion for it ; we should not permit frivolous subjects to occupy our attention.

17. Never laugh long at a time, nor often, nor excessively, i. e. boisterously.

18. Avoid as well playing the parts of a jester and buffoon ; it is a dangerous habit, and thou wilt run the risk of adopting, insensibly, the manners of the vulgar, and of losing the respect of thy friends.

19. All disputation with the ignorant should be avoided.

20. A habit of talking obscenely is equally dangerous ; if thou art present at such discourse, and the occasion be favourable, reprehend sharply him who allows himself in such an impropriety ; or at least thou canst make him sensible of thy displeasure by thy silence.

21. Solitude is not removed by a *man*, but by a companionable, honest man.

22. Engage in no undertaking without considering beforehand the necessary steps for its completion, and the effects to ensue from the operation which thou contemplatest ; examine into thy means, and see that the task which thou imposest on thyself is not disproportionate with thy capability.

23. Never call thyself a philosopher, nor waste superior maxims upon the ignorant ; but practice all that these precepts inculcate.

CHAPTER XII.

EPICURUS.

"First Athens, life with greatest comfort blest,
When it produced a person of such worth,
Whose breast contained, whose lips all truth brought forth."

And,

"Dispensing gifts acquired by his own breast,
He roused his soul to break the narrow bounds
Which fetter Nature."

Also,

"Thou chiefest glory of the Grecian state,
Thy paths I'll trace, resolved to imitate.
Thou, parent of philosophy, hast shown
The way to truth by precepts of thy own."—LUCRETIVS.

SELECTIONS FROM THE DOCTRINES OF EPICURUS (GATHERED CHIEFLY FROM THE LIVES OF THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS BY DIOGENES LAERTIUS).

1. Philosophy is the right exercise of reason, in the pursuit and attainment of a happy life.

2. A happy life consists in tranquillity of mind and health of body.

3. To correct the disorders of the mind, no one is either too young or too old; and he who pretends that the time for reflection is not yet come, or is past, is as he who says, that the time to live well and happily either is not yet come, or is quite gone.

4. It is philosophy alone which possesses its followers of an assuredness, and an immunity from all vain fears and base passions; whence it behoves us to apply ourselves to it, that we may be truly free.

5. Happy are those who possess by nature a free and vigorous intellect, and who live in a country where they can prosecute their inquiries after, and declare the truth without constraint.

6. Some acquire knowledge without assistance; and some require help, and would not advance beyond the point reached by others, but follow well.

7. The acquisition of knowledge is so solid a good in itself that it can never be lost.

8. As nothing ought to be deemed more valuable than truth, we should proceed towards its discovery by the most direct and natural means, neither devising any fictions ourselves, nor suffering ourselves to be imposed upon by poets, priests, or logicians.

9. It is not in poetic fiction, but in the great expanse of nature, lying open to observation, that the proper field exists for making our researches after truth.

10. A man of sense will not permit himself to be beguiled by the sophistries of oratory; and as he exacts no more from grammar than congruity, so neither will he require more from rhetoric than per

spicuity ; but he will confine himself to the use of a plain and familiar style.

11. A man who reflects will not assert a thing of which he doubts, nor, imagining that he knows every thing, will he presumptuously affirm his opinions without hesitation ; but he will only maintain those positive axioms which are certain and indisputable, as being built upon experience.

12. A man who is well-grounded in principles will not waver, nor recede from the convictions which he has grounded upon science ; nor will he, like those who are prescribed to by scholastic rule, pretend to philosophize concerning nature, yet not in the manner things themselves require, but according to vulgar opinion.

13. The scholar profanes the honour of his profession when he abandons truth and entertains notions that are fabulous, or mounts up into the supernatural ; for, as philosophy is nothing else than a due inquiry into nature, fiction can only prove an obstacle to the attainment of a true insight into facts.

14. Though ethics treat of the directing of manners, in order to enjoy a happy life, yet physics, which respect the contemplation of nature, form an essential part of philosophy.

15. If to be free from those notions which cause our apprehensions and dread of fancied supernatural spirits, and for even death itself to breed no disturbance in our minds, is of importance concerning our condition, as well as the ascertaining the just bounds of our desires, and the judging to what degree our griefs may be assuaged, then we necessarily stand in need of physiology, or the explication of nature.

16. Because it is not possible that we should arrive at the good of knowledge without having surveyed the nature of things, but, as children in the dark, tremble and are afraid of nothing, so we, miserably groping in the darkness of ignorance, fear phantoms that are but of fabulous existence, and fancy to ourselves notions of things that shall happen ; it is necessary, therefore, that this terror and darkness of the mind should be dispelled by impressions, derived from reason and nature.

17. The perception of the reasons of naturalists needs no more than the use of terms that are ordinary and perspicuous.

18. Of the word nothing more is sought than the use or signification ; but of the thing, the truth.

19. Truth is that which exists in the nature of things ; it is that very thing which is, and no other ; it is all one, to say a thing exists, or, that it is true.

20. All ratiocination depends upon what has been subjected to the senses ; and it is necessary that the senses first be corrected, before the reason which is founded on them can be true.

21. Taking away the certainty of the senses, and by that means destroying the general knowledge of things, we take away the correct rule of life and action.

22 We may see that a thing near at hand is square, and yet it

may appear round afar off; and the use of science is the rectifying our judgment, by supplying such defects of our senses, and thus grounding more firmly the confidence and security of life.

23. All phenomena or things presented to our senses are true, and conformable to nature and reason; but experience and knowledge are requisite for discriminating their appearances, and for forming our opinions justly.

24. After we have considered a subject in every point of view, we adhere to that understanding of it which is obviously confirmed by sense, and thus our opinions become founded in principles.

25. Genuine words are but those which are principles; they are but things which are natural; and that which is generally couched under each word should be something perspicuous and manifest, and be apprehended by the mind as a definition.

26. In speaking we should make use of such words as are common and perspicuous, lest either our meaning be not understood, or there be occasional and unnecessary waste of time in explanations.

27. We should endeavour to comprehend the force and meaning of the terms we hear used, lest either their obscurity keep us in ignorance, or their ambiguity lead us into errors.

28. If any man show a disposition to cavil and shuffle in verbal equivocations, an explanation should be insisted on; for by this means his tricks will be detected, and his arts will expose themselves; and instead of being able to entangle his opponent, he will display himself as a ridiculous sophister.

29. We clearly, then, avow our scope to be, that, through the perspection of the nature of things, no disturbance, neither from phantoms of the imagination, nor from death, nor from the unknown ends of desires, nor in any other way, should be experienced by us.

30. Now the things which this contemplation fathoms, being so many and so various, it seems very profitable to provide some proper compendium of the science of nature, that whosoever will apply his mind to the chief arguments of things, may be assistant to himself, according to the measure of his knowledge, in the contemplation of natural objects or realities.

31. To begin, then, with the universe: it is manifest that it is so named, forasmuch as it extendeth to whatever is, even beyond the sphere of our senses, and infinitely.

32. The use of the knowledge of the universe is to set our minds at rest.

33. That there are bodies in the universe sense attests; whence it is necessary to deduce conjecture from analogy with known principles for that which is not manifest. Every comprehended extent, or finite sphere of the universe, must have its processes connected with a like system of order, and consequently the natural mode must necessarily extend infinitely: nothing natural can exist, unless in contact with that which is also natural.

34. That which has not extremities, doubtless is not finite; and, consequently, the universal existence is infinite.

35. Highest or lowest cannot be attributed to the universe, as these terms can only be applicable to the relative position of one body with that which is immediately connected with it; but in infinity, which hath neither extremes nor middle, no such relation can be imagined.

36. To this is consentaneous, that the universe was ever what it is now; and such as it now is, it ever will remain; for there can be no changing it into a different thing; and besides the universe which extendeth infinitely, there is nothing: the universe cannot be separated from its attributes.

37. The uniformity of nature could not be preserved, if its principles were not certain and universal.

38. The universe exists eternally, but only in its principle, which is the universal mode, producing and reproducing continually, by changes of its own substance: there is a perpetual succession of rise, growth, and decay of every kind and form.

39. When one object passes away and is succeeded by another, the cause of the disappearance and reproduction still remains, as it is an eternal operation; the powers of production, preservation, dissolution, and renovation, reside in nature; they are attributes of nature: every thing is renewed in the bosom of death.

40. There is nothing immutable, unalterable, and eternal, except the nature of the universe, or the universal order of existence; particular conformations only pass into others; dissolution is not annihilation, but merely decomposition.

41. All compound substances, or particular organizations, are mortal, or liable to termination.

42. The constituents of every substance pass into infinite combinations.

43. Formation and dissolution are only mutation and alteration of substance; no substance is formed of any material which had not a previous existence, but only that form which the material now assumes, is a new modification, and it succeeds to a different denomination.

44. Things go into nothing, but there consists and persists a nature which cannot, in any part, or by any means, admit of a privation of its principle, and so be dissolved into nothing.

45. From nothing, nothing can be derived; and if aught could be annihilated, all things must perish absolutely, there not remaining any substance into which they could be changed.

46. Rightly, therefore, is the universe pronounced to be immutable; as there is no space beyond it to which it can be moved; so also, as it admits neither of increase nor decrease, creation nor annihilation, and neither commencing nor ending its duration, it is therefore absolutely eternal.

47. There can be no first principle or origin, for that which is infinite. No operation can take place in the universe different from the order of infinite action, and the existing order must be the eternal order. The principle of ever-changing forms, but ever to be unalterable in mode, cannot but be eternal.

48. The universe is an infinity of habitable worlds. It is absurd to suppose a finite number of planetary bodies only to exist in the infinite universe; it is not possible but that there must be also an infinite plurality of habitable globes.

49. That crude elementary condition, inferred by the term *eternal chaos*, has existed only in imagination. Desolations can only be partial, and they occur by means of the accidents, or natural causes, which operate in the universal order. Time alone is required for tracts of the most extensive devastation again to become fruitful and peopled, and again to present the agreeable and happy scenes of a flourishing country.*

50. Time is the course of the world. Time is not anything of itself, but only attributed to the action of things relatively by cogitation, as they are conceived to persevere in their present state, or to cease to be, or to have had a longer or shorter continuance, and to have it, or to have had it; or that they shall have it, or shall have had it; whence we are not to view time as a substantial entity, but consider it merely as the measure of events.

51. Mind ceases with the dissolution of the organization that supplies its faculties.

52. The universe is not a thinking being, not an imaginary principle termed Deity; its necessary properties admit of no intelligent comprehension in space; it is not the production of design, nor can have had a first cause.

53. Those who affirm the system and disposition of all (as though the term *all* could be applied to the universe), to be contrived and sustained by the power and reason of an infinite mind, do not perceive that in infinity there can be no conjunction of sense and motion, nor any sense in the least degree, where nature itself could feel no impulse—where there were not material organs; we are unable to conceive how a mind can exist without substance annexed with it.

54. With what eyes could Plato look upon the infinite world, and conceive it comprehended—finite—made and built by a fancied comprehender or God? What materials, what diagrams, what engines, what assistants in the interminable job? How reach infinity?—infinity with which the vastest extent comprehended by the imagination cannot compare in ratio. But, what is most remarkable, he gives us a world created, or having a beginning in time, and yet affirms it to be eternal. Can we admit him to have had the right use of his reason who was capable of thinking a thing to be everlasting, and yet to have had a commencement? †

* When a youth, Epicurus consulted his masters concerning the meaning of the word *chaos*, who not being able to explain it, referred him to the philosophers; and this first turned his attention to the study of nature.

† It would be tedious to show the inconsistency of Plato's doctrine: he sometimes denies the propriety of asserting a Father of the World, and thinks we are not to make too strict an inquiry into the nature of Deity. He will have God to be an incorporeal body, which would be no conceivable being, for it necessarily must be destitute of sense, prudence, and pleasure, which are all com-

55. To what end should this god, which he fancies, light up the sphere around him? If he meant to better his habitation, he must then have lived eternally before in darkness. If for his pleasure, what pleasure could that be to God, were there such, which he could so long have wanted? Was something lacking to his felicity? Then he was not happy to whom any thing could be wanting to his felicity.

56. Some will say that these operations of God were for the sake of men. Do they mean the wise? Then this fabric was made for a very few persons. Or for the foolish? There was no reason he should do such a favour for those he knew would prove wicked.

57. Again, what hath the said God got by the affair, since it is admitted that all worldly conditions are most miserable? Or did he make the world and men that he might have some to worship him? But what doth the worship of man advantage a God, who, they say, needeth nothing? Or, if he respect men so much, that he made the world for their sake, why did he make them frail and mortal? Why did he subject those whom he loveth to all evils?

58. It is plain that the notion of a God's existence is founded alone on the impressions which nature itself hath made on the minds of uninformed men.

59. Not comprehending the fact of the necessary eternity of the universal conditions—unable to perceive that the infinite natural phenomena necessarily form the perpetuity—the ignorant have recourse to the aid of a magical phantom, whose assistance they would not seek if they understood the boundless region maintained by the union of modifications, or chain of causes. Thus, they impose on themselves an eternal mystery which they dread day and night; for who can be free from the fear of a power that, they fancy, controuls and animadverts on every thing; one by whom every thing is inspected—a prying, ever-busy invisibility?

60. We should beware of referring the infinite natural operations to ourselves. Our globe is but a trifling point in the universe to which the weakness of ignorance has fixed its limits.

61. That which confounds our imagination is the false measures we apply to time and space. To judge of the duration and extent of

prehended in the vulgar notions of his attributes. He likewise affirms that the world, the earth, the heavens, the stars, the wind, and those gods delivered down to us by our ancestors, constitute the Divinity. These opinions, taken separately, are apparently false; and together, they are directly repugnant to each other. His fanciful notions seem also to have given a romantic and enthusiastic turn to his conceptions on morals, and his ethical doctrine is, in some particulars, defective, and in others, extravagant and absurd.

Strength and heat of fancy prevailing in his composition, over judgment, he was too apt to soar beyond the limits of actual being, and range in the imaginary regions of abstracted ideas; and on which account, though there is always a vastness and sublimity in his manner, he did not philosophize always according to truth and nature.

In such a wonderful maze of words, says Brucker, does Plato involve his notions, that none of his disciples, not even the sagacious Stagyrte, could unfold them; and yet we receive them as sacred mysteries, and imagine that our intellects are too feeble to penetrate the conceptions of this *divine* philosopher.

our earth, we should make the attempt to place it in comparison with the infinite and eternal universe: we should then find that the globe, even were it a million times larger than it is, is subject to the general affection or principle of change, and as much the creature of natural accident, or necessary processes, as the molecule.

62. The course of the natural process consists of the universal combination and action of the material and eternal orders of being, the energies of each individual part of which are constantly exerted.

63. The closer we observe the intimate relation maintained between one thing and another throughout the world, the less we see it necessary to have recourse to a divine intelligence. For these reasons, we ought to admit the eternity of the world.

64. Do we not find that things happen in a natural course of cause and effect, and not otherwise than as no such thing or power, called providence, existed? Can a man be other than he is by natural circumstances? Do vows preserve from shipwreck? Do prayers obtain children? Or does any event happen, the character of which is not to be naturally possible?

65. I am ashamed of human imbecility, when it fetcheth divinations even out of dreams; as if an imp-god, if such can be fancied, hopping from bed to bed, did admonish snoring persons, by whispering to them visions of what would happen to them shortly.

66. As to prophecies and miracles, it may be evinced, every way, that all such lies are the mere preached impostures of priests.

67. As for death, it is nothing more than the inevitable termination of individual sensation.

68. That the effect called mind ceaseth, and is entirely discontinued, is manifest; because that it hath a beginning, and is proved to be nothing without the body: how great a folly is it to imagine that what is mortal can be immortal!

69. As the mind was not before birth, so neither will it be after death; and as, before the former we did not experience any sensation, so, neither after the latter shall we possess any consciousness; for, then there will be no longer any touch, or any other sense.

70. As the mind was not in operation before the natural formation of the body, how should it be exercised after the destruction of that to which it is but an accident—a compounded faculty?

71. All fears of hell are vain; the furies, the devil, hell, and damnation are but fables.

72. Far from us then, be the credulous faith in heaven and hell, and in those lying representations with which the superstitious fanatics think to frighten those whom they regard as not being sufficiently punished by the sense of crime itself, and with which they flatter others into an opinion that their virtue is not adequately recompensed by its proper satisfactions here.

73. It is sufficiently demonstrated in the world, both physical and moral, that the natural orders of existence are not the subject of

creation, or providential preservation; no fancied deity has had a hand in the production of beings, nor exists there any such to care about their preservation.

74. Let us conclude, that the study of nature is not superfluous; since it procures man that information which yields peace to his mind, frees him from vain terrors, and conducts him to a sense of the only real motives that exists for his performing his duties.

75. I repeat, it is the office of physiology, accurately to examine the causes of the phenomena which are in nature; and from this science proceeds all the satisfaction which consists in knowledge.

76. The principal branch of science is that which regards the conditions of our being; ethics, moral philosophy, the rules of correct human action, or the happy conducting of life.

77. Morals comprise the whole range of human conduct; the practice of justice forms the most weighty obligation of man towards man, and justice consists in committing no injury against the person, property, or character of another, nor offending against another's sensibility or comfort; whatever concerns the first species of injury, being termed *morals proper*, and the last, pertaining to manners, being denominated *minor morals*.

78. The highest intellectual acquirement consists in the sagacious, assiduous, courageous exercise of our reason, or intelligent faculties, by which we attain a knowledge of the actual conditions of our physical being, and the correct sense of properly or happily conducting ourselves through life.

79. Every animal, as soon as born, naturally seeks enjoyment, and esteems it as the chief good; and each, also, regards pain as the greatest evil, and to its utmost ability, shuns it.

80. The object of life, by the tacit consent of all men, is felicity; and, since almost all miss that end, must it not be the fact, that they use not the right means to attain it.

81. When we behold so many, who, though possessing all things necessary to the happy use of life—abounding in wealth, flourishing in a hopeful issue, and whose situation in life is such as is commonly esteemed desirable—and who, notwithstanding, are anxious and discontented, full of cares and solitudes, distracted with terrors—in a word, leading most miserable lives—we may thence infer that they are ignorant of what true felicity consists, and by what means it may be attained.

82. Seeing that man has everything necessary for enjoyment, and yet that he is the prey of a thousand internal chagrins, it must be confessed that the fault lies in himself.

83. To cleanse and rectify the heart, that it may be satisfied with a little, and be pleased in the enjoyment of everything which nature supplies, and reason admits, we must philosophise not for show, but seriously; we must not defer the consideration of happiness to the future, but even to-day, it concerns us to live happily; and it is a mischief of folly, that it is always about to begin to enjoy, defers

beginning, and, in the mean time, death prevents this design being carried into effect.

84. Our ability is limited by necessity; content can only be obtained by conforming the human passions to the conditions of human existence. The most philosophical desire is, that life should consist in a succession of pleasing emotions, and death be considered as an event neither to be coveted nor feared.

85. Strange it is—we have had our birth; we cannot be born a second time, and our life must come to an end; yet we talk continually about future enjoyment, and lose the present. So our life is wasted in delay, and we pass away, having lived in vain.

86. When we say that pleasure is the sovereign good, enjoyment the chief end of life, we are far from meaning the pleasures, or rather the indulgences of voluptuousness, or those which consist in gross, excessive, and pernicious gratifications, as some have ignorantly or maliciously represented; for it is not riot and dissipation, nor the other consuming excitements of the senses, which render life really pleasant; but it is the sober exercise of reason, which inquires into the nature of those things which are to be desired or avoided, and which banishes ignorance, doubt, and fear. What we have affirmed is, that the way to a happy life is to enjoy as much of the good, and suffer as little of the evil incident to human nature as possible.

87. Supreme enjoyment exists in morals, and in freedom of life, when it is consistent with the dictates of reason.

88. Temperance, or the regulation of our desires and passions, enables us to enjoy pleasure, without suffering any consequent inconvenience.

89. All excess is incompatible with health and with happiness.

90. They may exclaim against us, that we enervate virtue, in not allowing her so much power as to render a wise man free from all passion or affection, but that we permit him to be moved therewith; as, for instance, to be grieved at the death of friends; but as we set a high value upon reason, as being able to deliver us from vain terrors and superfluous desires, so likewise, we not a little esteem it, that it reduceth not the natural affections to such a mediocrity, as that there remain not a due sense of humanity.

91. The dialectics of the stoics neither teach us how to become better men, nor how to reason with increased effect.

92. Certainly that total exemption from feeling, of which these men boast, proceeds from depraved education, hardened habit, inordinate ambition of vain glory, and a kind of fanaticism or madness; so that it seems right to be sensible to some passion, to be affected with some grief, to shed some tears, such as proceed from persons touched with love and tenderness, and not to expunge sympathy from our nature, rather than to be wise in the way they would have us to be.

93. What avails it to carry the moral system beyond the limits of

nature, and to form a fanciful image of a perfect man, which can have no archetype in real life?

94. Only the prudent, or, if you like the word better, the *wise* person can live without discontent and without fear, by cutting off the sources of vanity and error, and contenting himself within the limits of nature.

95. If anything happens contrary to our expectations or designs, we know that it is not within the reach of human industry, sagacity, or power, either to foresee or prevent all the accidents that happen in the natural course of events.

96. Nature shows us that the desire of unlimited pleasure is ridiculous; and, knowing this, our life may be rendered perfectly happy; for a man, being acquainted with the true conditions of his being, and practising a just mode of living, infinity of time is not necessary to his felicity; he is not deprived of existing pleasure, though he perceives that his mortal predicament leads him insensibly to the grave, since he there finds what happiness finishes his course.

97. A happy life consists not so much in pampering the appetites as in the exercise of reason, with sobriety and a sound mind, searching the causes why one object is to be preferred and another rejected, and expelling those opinions which occasion so much trouble to the mind.

98. Most men, in fact, lead preposterous lives; transported inconsiderately and intemperately; but wisdom summoned to our relief, reduces all our gratifications into decent order; and, with her attainments, all anxieties of the mind are quieted, and there remains nothing to aim at in order to complete our satisfaction.

99. Considerateness, then, which convinces us that we cannot be happy without being prudent, nor worthy without being just; and that to be prudent, benevolent, and just, is to be happy: this must be the chief quality of our character.

100. Prudence seems to comprise the office of all the virtues, as it provides for every occurrence of life, and directs us to happiness; it comprehends the art of living discreetly, justly, and honourably, and it instructs men to free their understandings from the clouds of prejudice.

101. He who has discovered the limited nature of life, must needs have found out the happy secret of rightly ordering his whole course, so as to have no occasion for seeking his felicity in those things, the acquisition whereof is full of uncertainty and danger.

102. As regards intellectual pleasure, its perfection consists in the extinction of every idea capable of afflicting us with uneasiness.

103. The virtues are naturally allied with happiness; for who can be superior to him who thinks correctly, and who is subject to no terrors?—to him who thinks that the necessaries of life are easily procured, and its evils of short duration; that necessity is accountable to no one, and that fortune is feeble and inconstant? Meditate on these facts, and you will never be disturbed, not even in a dream;

you will enjoy continual tranquillity, and live supremely happy amongst men. For a man, who is perpetually conversant with the blessings which reason can bestow, seems to be superior to the rest of mankind.

104. He who aims at excellence should be provided with maxims—that is to say, with principles of truth, reduced into clear and precise propositions, to serve as a guide and support to the mind when in doubt and uncertainty.

105. Good and evil can only be recognized by sentiment. Now, death is the extinction of all sensation; let this be our principle, and we shall know how to enjoy our mortal life; we shall not be occupied in thinking about the expectation of joys that are to be arrived at in a fancied future life, and shall renounce the vain hope of immortality.

106. Death, that word which makes the vulgar shrink, does not harm us; for, as long as we are alive, it is not death; and when it is death, we are no longer alive.

107. Death is a matter of indifference to us; for all good and evil is in our perceptions; and death is the extinction of all feeling and sentiment; instead of fancying an eternity added to life, we ought to do away with the desire of immortality; for nothing in life can be terrible to him who believes that there is nothing terrible in ceasing to exist. He is a fool, then, who dreads death, not as a present, but as a future evil; and this most frightful of all calamities is, in truth, nothing; it is neither being with the living nor with the dead, and is, therefore, nothing; the dead are not.

108. Death concerns us not; for that which has undergone dissolution is insensible; and where there is no sense there is no mind: the mind survives not the senses. While we are, death is not, for we are not dissolved; and when death is, we are not; for this condition of body, and its mental functions, exists no longer; neither are we.

109. It cannot be expressed how great unhappiness mankind have drawn upon themselves by imagining such phantoms as gods, and attributing to them wrath and severity; by reason whereof, men's minds being dejected, every one trembles with fear when they hear the thunder, or when any other phenomenon happens, which he thinks indicates the anger of his God, and his intention to punish or awe him,—poor miserable man!

110. But it is not so with those, who, instructed by reason, know that the natural phenomena of the world proceed in a process that is regular, necessary, and eternal.

111. If we were without inquietude regarding that which passes over our heads, and about death and what follows; and if we could, without philosophy, know the bounds at which our pleasures ought to stop, in order not to turn into pain, then the particular study of nature would be useless.

112. If we are without painful anxiety in the consideration of that which exists beyond our earth, and not disquieted about death; and

if we are sensible that both our wants and sufferings are of no vast consequence ; other philosophy than this is entirely supererogatory.

113. If our mind is informed of the limited faculties of our bodies which produce it, and if we are free from doubts about eternity, and have conducted ourselves through the course of our lives with propriety, we need not concern ourselves about immortality, nor shall we be uneasy about the termination of life. Our knowledge of the truth, instead of causing us to be distressed by a sense of self-littleness, and dissatisfaction on account of being obliged to relinquish the fictions, believed in during our ignorance, of immortality and illimitable glories in heaven, should rather lead us to consider ourselves as exalted to the highest grandeur possible by science, and it may console us to know that the completion of the natural conditions are perfectly innocuous.

114. Those who are smitten with the alarms which the fables of the priests inspire, can only be freed from their apprehensions by informing themselves in the science of realities ; without the knowledge of the truth acquired by this study there can be no real enjoyment.

115. To be without fears of our fellow-men, is of little advantage, as long as we are in doubt and terror about that which is going on over us, or under us, or in infinity.

116. Let us renounce our notions of celestial spirits, either good or bad ; if any such superior powers existed, there are many things occur which would either be ordered otherwise, or not happen at all. Those who have imagined these spiritual natures—these monstrosities of the mind—were ignorant of the infinite and eternal nature ; and those who pretend to a knowledge of, or to have seen any such, could be but visionaries or knaves.

117. He only is impious who conforms to the worship of Gods feigned by the crafty priests, and imposed on the vulgar.

118. Since there are natural bounds to individual duration, it is right so to reflect, that we may dispense with the vain hope of immortality. Death is easily contemplated, because it vainly threatens pain, when there can be no patient.

119. Supreme enjoyment consists in the absence of all cause for uneasiness ; wherever there is enjoyment, as long as it is such, there can be no pain or grief.

120. Can a man attain to a greater fitness for enjoyment, than that which consists in being freed from noxious ideas of deity, and fear of death ; in the perceptions of the attributes of nature ; in the experience that happiness is easily obtained, and that the evils which threaten him, are but light and of short duration ; in scouting the notion of a predestinating fate, knowing that the influence of circumstances only decide his lot according to his own conduct ; in being convinced that if a destiny or providence subjected him to its laws, he could not direct his steps himself ; but on the contrary, knowing that his actions are not influenced by a constraining power,

depriving him of his own judgment and will, he is entitled to blame or merit?

121. Our time should be made useful, instead of spending it in melancholy reflections on our mortality. The knowledge that, with the termination of our animal life, terminate also its functions—the senses, or mind—should be deemed consolatory, as relieving us from illusion, doubt, and fear; rather than that we should render ourselves miserable by a vain and embittering dissatisfaction on account of being subjected to that necessary accident.

122. The assured knowledge that death is the termination of our consciousness, enables us to enjoy this mortal life, not adding to it an illusory futurity, but casting away the vain desire of immortality.

123. The consideration that no pain, or, if any, for so short a time (for no great pain lasts long), can be endured by us at death, ought to be felt as consolatory while engaged in its contemplation; no evil that man can suffer is either eternal, or of long continuance.

124. Foolish and ridiculous is he who saith that “it is good either not to be born at all; or, the sooner the better to pass the gates of death.”

125. The cures for anxiety and discontent consist in our philosophically understanding the tenure of our life; and in justly appreciating the accidents which affect us, as of scarcely sufficient importance to warrant our being annoyed by vexations and disappointments: the means for alleviating our personal sufferings is to betake ourselves to fortitude, and undergo them with a constant mind, rather than exasperate them by our impatience.

126. Whenever hope and fear, with their several offsprings—discontent and trouble—infect the mind, philosophy only can apply such remedies as shall expel the disease. When the vain desires of wealth and honours, fear of gods, of death, and the like illusions have once taken possession of the mind, they leave no part thereof sound.

127. The remedial virtues are derived from reason, of which prudence is more especially calculated for counteracting those mental diseases whereof vice consists.

128. Reason, or the science of ratiocination, attained by experience and sedulous observation, and confirmed by the demonstrations of matured judgment, is very different from mere opinion.

129. A sober or well-ordered reason procures a pleasant or happy life by means of the virtues practised. We cannot live pleasantly, unless we live prudently, honestly, and justly; nor can we live prudently, honestly, and justly, without living pleasantly: the virtues are co-natural with a happy life, and it is impossible to separate a happy life from them.

130. A life spent in accordance with the principles of justice must be free from perturbation.

131. The just live most free from trouble and disorder; the unjust, on the contrary, are always disturbed and uneasy.

132. Of all men, he that is most just enjoys the greatest tran-

quillity, and he that is most unjust the least. The most useful conviction that can be imprinted on the mind of rational beings is, that every crime is a certain cause of suffering to him who commits it.

133. Injustice ought to be avoided, not only on account of the direct inconveniences which are retorted on the unjust, but much more because it never suffers the mind to be at rest.

134. The main penalty attending injustice is the fear which ensues that the breach of duty will be avenged; the wicked are, in spite of prosperity, unhappy, through the distrust and lonely void which render their hearts a desert.

135. He who has violated the natural compact of society cannot possibly rest assured that his guilt will remain concealed during his life, however safe he may consider himself at the present moment.

136. It is not possible for the man whose actions have violated justice and injured human society, to pass his days in repose and comfort; for though he may impose upon the world, he must needs fear that this will not be the case for ever; he who has committed a crime is never at rest, but is always restless in his conscience, and under a perpetual dread of discovery, and sense of his deserved punishment.

137. As nothing can be more conducive to security, so nothing can better insure a quiet and pleasant life, than to live innocently, and upon no occasion to violate the common covenants of peace and propriety.

138. In general, that which is called justice is the same thing, in fact, everywhere: it is the enforcement of reciprocal utility: places and circumstances only vary it. It is the interest of every individual in a state to conform to the laws of justice; for by injuring no one, and rendering to every man his due, he contributes his part towards the preservation of that society, upon the permanency of which his own safety depends.

139. Mankind, united in society, discover the utility and advantages of binding themselves to the observance of certain conditions for their living inoffensively one towards another: the necessity for the mutual exercise of justice, in order to the common enjoyment of the rights of nature, is the ground on which it is prescribed.

140. Whatever experience teaches to be useful and beneficial in reference to the community, ought to be esteemed just, provided that every one finds an advantage in it.

141. If that which is supposed to be just, is generally useful to society, its justice is evident; if it be not generally useful, it ceases to be just.

142. It often happens in society, that some vulgar or customary belief, or religious observance, is enforced as right and just, but which is not right and just towards individuals; and so, not being naturally and generally consistent with human liberty, it cannot, except by abuse, and only in name, be reputed right and just—since that which hath the true reason or principle of natural right and justice, is such

as that it is not only prescribed as profitable and good, but is really such for all, and does not violate the rights of any individuals, nor infringe on the public liberty.

143. When will the people have sense to release themselves from the arts of politicians, whose ends are not to be answered by the simple principle of morals, or human propriety, but who uphold some solemn imposition, by which the mass of fools are made to maintain an expensive priesthood, influential in their subjugation, and some superstitious and ridiculous observances become established, sure to defraud the nation of an important portion of its liberty and happiness?

144. Natural right or political justice is that which all men can agree upon; and is no other than the symbol of utility, as having an evident tendency to keep men from injuring, or being injured by one another; so that they may live securely and enjoy their liberties: a good which we are taught naturally to desire, and laws should be confined to its enforcement. There can prevail no system of illusion but what must be incompatible with justice: true liberty can only be founded on truth.

145. Natural rights mean individual liberty.

146. Common right is acknowledged by universal consent to be the cause of that justice men have observed one towards another; and by means whereof, without offending others, individuals live free from injury and insult. This is the only true religion, and needs no faith in supernatural monsters, nor observance of the superstitious days and ceremonies so profitable to priests.

147. The grand rule of life is to avoid suffering and procure enjoyment; and all good or evil is to be measured by this standard.

148. We ought at all times to study our happiness; for having this, we have all things.

149. No indulgence is an evil in itself; that only is to be esteemed such, which is followed by a greater mortification and uneasiness than are compensated for by the satisfaction of its enjoyment.

150. The harm of pleasure is not felt in its enjoyment, but vice is detestable for its evil consequences.

151. Virtue is appreciated for the pleasure it produces.

152. Our reason should be exercised in considering the nature of things; in weighing their advantages and their disadvantages; and, according to circumstances, we sometimes abstain from indulgence, as avoiding that which is evil, and we also sometimes incur suffering as adopting that which is good.

153. By the denial of momentary gratifications, a person's happiness, in many instances, will be increased.

154. A correct perception of moral objects is necessary; and these should always be kept in view, in order to make them the rule for determining our judgments, without which all our life will be troubled by uncertainty and distraction; our minds will consist of

nought but opinions or prejudices, and never be grounded in principles and knowledge.

155. If we admit not the doctrine that the evidence of our senses should invariably be consulted, we deprive ourselves of the means for testing the opinions we may suspect to be erroneous, and there will no longer exist a rule by which we can confirm the correctness of our ideas.

156. Unless we distinguish between the ideas that are confirmed by the experiences of the senses, and those which spring immediately from the sensations, the affections, dreams, vulgar faith, and all the false impressions to which the mind is liable, we shall never arrive at any settled convictions, and shall find ourselves without confidence of character.

157. If we accord to all our sensations the needful examination, and adopt no ideas as truth but those which have been submitted to such a criterion, we shall always be prepared, when called upon, to deliver the reasons for our opinions.

158. Naturally, those things which are necessary to be known, and which serve for common use, are easy to be discovered, and those things which are difficult to be learnt are not necessary.

159. Without deliberately examining our nature, and accommodating our actions to the end or scope of life which we propose to ourselves, all our conduct will be full of indecision and confusion, and our caprices and errors will be followed by constant inconveniences and mortifications.

160. How shall we ever be contented with our condition, if we mingle together the wants of nature, the appetites of passion, and the whims of caprice?

161. A fixed object should be adhered to, if we would not be as the bubble driven by the wind.

162. We should highly prize moderation, not merely as being a rule for contenting ourselves with little, but in order that we may be satisfied with that little when nothing beside remains.

163. Some objects of desire are natural and necessary; others are natural without being necessary; and there are some others which are neither natural nor necessary, but merely the offspring of whim or caprice.

164. Those desires the gratifying of which may be dispensed with, and no pain or injury to the body be incurred by disregarding them, can only be of force because our notions attach to them a value they have not; and it is only owing to this false estimation that we allow ourselves to be actuated by them.

165. Those desires which have not necessities for their object, and which, not being satisfied, merely give rise to earnest and vehement instigations of the mind, are but vain inclinations not tending to the acquisition of anything, by the want of which the frame of the body would be affected; such propensities it is not very difficult to re-

linquish, particularly if that which is desired be not of easy attainment, or might occasion some inconveniences if obtained.

166. Poverty, regulated by the law of nature, is opulence.

167. What an advantage is it to be superior to the threats of fortune.

168. Moderate wants render us independent ; for those only must stand in awe of fortune who, being accustomed to live sumptuously, conceive that they could not but be most miserable if they had not large sums at their command to answer their exorbitant expenses.

169. We may generally observe that the mind which is exalted and insolent in prosperity, and cast down in adversity, is abject and base.

170. By being able to distinguish the desires, attention to which is necessary, from those which may be discarded, we shall be satisfied with those simple gratifications which preserve our bodies in health, and our minds in peace : these two constitute our happiness.

171. There can be no augmentation of enjoyment when our wants are supplied ; beyond this it can only be varied.

172. By means of others we can only obtain a certain amount of felicity, but there is an art for commanding its full sources in ourselves ; this consists in simplifying our wants, in dispensing with superfluities, and contenting ourselves with necessities.

173. The supplies which nature demands are but few and easily procured ; other desires are never satisfied : the means for gratifying the whims of fantasy are difficult of access ; he whom little does not satisfy, nothing can satisfy.

174. If we live according to nature we never can be poor ; if, according to opinion, we never can be rich.

175. He who knows how easy it is to obviate the evils of indigence, and secure a sufficiency for supplying his real wants, will neither be affected by anxiety, nor be obliged to submit to slavish toil.

176. Reason and prudence have generally commanded the essentials of life ; a wise man will not be disposed to place himself in the power of fortune.

177. Virtue is to be sought after for the pleasure it affords ; natural desires are easily defined and easily satisfied, while those of vanity are infinite.

178. When it satisfies the cravings of hunger, the commonest food yields as much gratification as the nicest preparations.

179. Temperate habits will maintain our health in vigour, and render us equal to the discharge of all the active duties of life.

180. Temperance preserves the functions of the mind in serenity and acuteness ; to the offices of the body it secures health, and consequent agility and vigour. The effects of excessive repletion are, to injure the senses, confuse the intellect, and induce an unmanly languor and stupidity. As the body becomes diseased, it will of course be enfeebled, inactive, and burdensome. What application or exertion can he be capable of whose limbs are oppressed, nerves relaxed,

head disordered, spirits beclouded,—whose whole system is feverish and choleric, and whose mind is affected by a petulancy incompatible with contemplation? And all those evils are occasioned by immoderate indulgence of the appetites.

181. We should not despise the prudent indulgence in the pleasures of sense; but we should not pretend that sensual enjoyments are at all comparable with intellectual delights.

182. If we hold the esteem of our fellow-men as of any value, we shall find a pleasure in performing well our parts.

183. All should tend to the practice of virtue, and the conservation of life and liberty; and death should not be the subject of dread.

184. Misery is the companion of want; and the same vain opinion which first persuades a man that his own estate is not sufficient for him, will continue to persuade him that one world is not sufficient, but that he wants more and more, aiming at infinity.

185. Men are more easily made rich by diminishing their desires than by adding to their riches.

186. The acquisition of wealth is often merely a change of misery, and not its termination.

187. We should look upon content as the greatest good. Not that it is requisite we should have only a little to live upon, but when we have only a little we should be satisfied; for this reason, that those best enjoy abundance who are contented with the least; and, so that the pains of poverty are removed, simple fare can give a relish equal to the most expensive luxuries.

188. How great a good is it to require only what is simple and easily obtained; because, that which is most sweet and free from trouble in a man's life, all depends upon his being content with the least.

189. How vain are those whose cager and restless minds are excited by the trifles of magnificence, not understanding how few and small those things are which are enjoyed the most, and make the happiest life.

190. That felicity which has its source in ourselves is far greater than that which is derived from other things.

191. The quiet and safety that are found in retirement from the world may be equally enjoyed by us, though in it; provided that we adhere strictly to the line of temperance, and confine our desires to what is requisite for our preservation. In fact, whatever nature provides most delicious and exquisite is common and limited; but if we listen to those wanton appetites which opinion creates, when it is deceived by false appearances, our luxurious propensities will be insatiable, and nothing will ever satisfy us.

192. A man, by the exertion of his reason, may be superior to all the injuries of mankind, whether arising from hatred, envy, or contempt; he need never trouble himself with public affairs; he will take care never to be reduced to poverty, nor ever be wanting in foresight; he will prefer living in the country; he will always be so

careful of his reputation as to avoid being despised ; and he will not be disturbed if another is thought wiser than himself.

193. It is fitting that a prudent man take such care of his reputation as not to become contemptible ; and this is effected not so much by avenging injuries and resenting offences, as by living well, and giving no man just cause for expressing his contumely or malediction.

194. Prudence suggests that we do well to observe, as well as the laws, the general customs of society, to the end that, participating in the common good, we draw no particular remarks upon ourselves.

195. Those who are naturally sedate and thoughtful, or who, by the exercise of their reason, have suppressed ambition and vanity ; or who, having made trial thereof, have escaped as out of a tempest, or taken warning by many eminent precedents, will justly conceive that quiet and retirement are much the best for them.

196. To what end should I engage in civil factions, and study to flatter and please a party, when the knowledge prized by me is disregarded by the people, and I have no taste for what the people admire ?

197. Live close, or private ; for experience teacheth that he hath lived well who hath well concealed himself.

198. But if the commonwealth should summon us, and really stand in need of our assistance, we should be inhuman and wanting in patriotism, when we might benefit many, if we refused to attend at its call.

199. Every man should consult his own genius, and apply himself to such objects as he finds suitable to his taste. To one, rest is quiet, and action is labour ; to another, rest is labour, and action is quiet ; so that the course we do best to adopt, is that we can proceed in without any reluctance or repugnance of our disposition.

200. Having set at rest the primary question regarding the nature of his being, the minor details of life are best pursued by each one in accordance with his own taste and opportunity, as to the branch of utility to which he shall devote his attention and labour.

201. From the calm station of wisdom, we may view the tumults of life and the contentions of fools ; not that it is pleasant that others be afflicted, but it is pleasing to be sensible that we are not liable to be involved in the same evils.

202. Rural life yields us repose and liberty.

203. There is a state of mind in which it is possible to lead a life so sweetly, so serenely, and constantly, as our society, course of life, constitution of body, age, and other circumstances, will allow.

204. A wise man, even though he should be cruelly tormented, will still be possessed of some means of enjoyment : innocence of life, and serenity of conscience, will lighten his sufferings.

205. In chronic disorders there are intervals of relief, the pleasure of which almost compensates for the previous suffering.

206. There is a consolation in virtue, even though its possessor, while in torments, utters complaints and groans.

207. A good man, though deprived of sight, would yet be happy ; for, if the night does not diminish the enjoyment of life, why should blindness, which so nearly resembles it, have that effect ? However some gratifications may be wanting, yet there are many others which can be enjoyed in darkness.

208. A man may live long and happily without being able to distinguish colours ; but without the light of truth, derived from cultivated reason, no man can be happy.

209. A certain blind philosopher was of opinion, that the perspicacity of the mind was very much obscured by eye-sight ; and, while others could scarcely be said to discern things that were immediately before them, he launched abroad into the abyss of immensity, not halting at any bounds.

210. Those who practise beneficence procure good will to themselves, and the tender estimation of others ; so that we are interested for our own sakes in doing good to others, so far as it may be done by us without our being improvident.

211. Such as esteem and practise the virtues, perform those actions, and keep in view those ends, which are honest and decent ; so as, by them, it may be manifest to all men how odious are inhumanity and selfishness, and how amiable are sensibility and philanthropy.

212. We must not only bear with injuries, nor only pardon them mildly, but we should even kindly encourage and congratulate him who betakes himself to an improved course of life.

213. We should rejoice with him who, having gone astray, shall have returned into the path of virtue.

214. Those who can possess the talent to secure their feelings from injury in respect of exterior relations and their connexions with others, will be able to live agreeably in the bosom of friendship and mutual confidence, and yet will so have reflected on the frailty of all particular objects, as to be resigned to the loss of their endeared friends without becoming the prey of despondency.

215. He who would live unmolested by that which passes around him, should frame his expectations accordingly ; he should not be affected by that which it is out of his power to alter ; and should be able to abstain from many things, and particularly from those which furnish no useful enjoyment.

216. The same reason that confirms the mind in convictions that no lasting or eternal ill is to be dreaded, assures us also, that, during life, there is no sanctuary so safe, no protection so sure, as that of friendship.

217. Our friend should be one whose candour, simplicity, and sincerity, we can esteem ; not one that is morose, querulous, and murmuring at all things ; but one who, by his complacency and cheerfulness, may render our life pleasant.

218. Happy is he who possesses a friend in whose individuality is exemplified the highest improvement of human character.

219. Friendship is founded in interest; its tie is reciprocal usefulness.

220. Friendship is one of life's greatest consolations, and urbanity one of the most approved graces of society.

221. In all life's experience there is not a sweeter source of consolation than friendship; by means of which, man, helpless as he naturally is, finds his security and support.

222. Envy, hatred, and disdain, are the instigations to be inimical to others; a good man will be superior to the influence of these passions.

223. The man that is really wise and good will never become otherwise.

224. Those who make reason and virtue the objects of their choice may truly be congratulated.

225. Virtue and felicity are sisters, never to be found apart.

226. Firmness of mind is a virtue that may be acquired.

227. The preservation of health is a most desirable object.

228. A good man will be incapable of setting at nought the obligations which render matrimony sacred.

229. Neither birth, rank, nor condition, should be impediments to the union of those who have formed mutual attachments. The attainment of a proper age, and not too great a contrast in the ages of the parties, should be the only considerations.

230. In arranging our economy, the after part of our life should be calculated for by prudence, but without our counting, for a moment, on its continuance as a certainty.

231. We should regard the conjunctures and opportunities that happen to us in the course of our lives as the means on which depends the chain of our prosperity or adversity, rather than look to a blind goddess called Fortune.

232. As unhappy a propensity as any is the indulgence of that anxiety of character which causeth a foolish apprehension of ill to come, and which, most likely, never will come.

CHAPTER XIII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE AXIOMS AND PRECEPTS OF HERACLITUS.

1. From nothing, nothing can be derived.

2. The world is the infinite material existence, which was neither made by gods nor men, but always necessarily was and will be.

3. The individual bodies which compose the world in their respective durations, and which connect the eternal series of their several kinds, have both beginning and end.

4. In the action of the universe, or infinite medium of existence, there is no such thing as stop or rest.

5. Nothing in nature perishes, nor is any thing new ever produced; but all the phenomena of formation and dissolution are merely changes in the forms of bodies.

6. The faculty of reason, exercised on the perception of that which is around us, is the judge of truth.

7. Prize mental attainments rather than personal accomplishments.

8. Burden not the mind with too great acquirements; for even the philosopher must necessarily be ignorant of many subjects.

9. The end of life is to render it happy while it endures.

10. Contentment is the sovereign good.

11. The greatest triumph is, to obtain the mastery of ourselves; and supreme virtue consists in being as fair in our actions as in our professions.

12. Know your proper place, and conduct yourself prudently.

13. Such is the condition of man, that disease deprives him of enjoyment, hunger excludes satiety, labour precludes repose; these chase each other by turns.

14. In dreaming, the exercise of the senses is obstructed, and the connexion of the reflective faculties with that which surrounds us is interrupted; on waking, this connexion is restored, and the power of reason returns.

15. A people ought to be as willing to fight for their liberties as on account of their territorial boundaries.

16. Deriding the sacrifices by which it was believed the gods were appeased and propitiated—"these devotees," said he, "think themselves cleansed by polluting themselves with blood; as if a man should wallow in filth as a means of purification."

CHAPTER XIV.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS OF ISOCRATES.

1. In treating of morality, we do not attempt to set forth novel discoveries; for the subject can only suggest simple and common truths, drawn from the ordinary conduct of life. The merit of a moral treatise consists in collecting, as extensively as possible, the maxims scattered amongst all nations, and placing them in an interesting point of view.

2. Let us not suppose that the care and study, so serviceable in other respects, are of no avail in rendering ourselves wiser and better. Man would be too miserable, if, after attaining the skill to tame and train the most ferocious animals, he could not aspire to improving himself in knowledge and virtue.

3. Our youths should not only be excited to virtue by advice and precepts, but we should convince them by our example, of the necessity for their becoming good citizens.

4. We should not be satisfied with merely approving those who do well, but we should emulate their good deeds.

5. Virtue is profitable for all things; those in whom it has been encouraged and fortified for years, lose it not in old age; infinitely preferable to riches and birth, it renders easy that which appeared impracticable; supports with courage that which would dismay the multitude; it disdains indolence, and aspires only to be useful.

6. Modesty, diffidence, habits of temperance, and love of justice—these are the virtues that should form the character of young men.

7. Strength and agility perish with man, but the arts and sciences survive and exist always for the benefit of mankind. Sensible men will respect those who are distinguished by their talents, and who do honour to their country,

8. A tolerable knowledge of essential matters is far preferable to an intimate acquaintance with useless accomplishments; and to possess some superiority over others in points of general interest, is much better than shining by frivolous acquirements.

9. The most sacred obligations will be readily violated by him who has contracted vicious habits; on the other hand, where good inclinations have been forcibly impressed, there will be a willing conformity to good order.

10. Youth, excited by restlessness, and prompted by vehement passions, have particular need for their energies being directed toward propriety; pleasing exercises should be provided them; for, to be confirmed in good principles, it is necessary to be furnished with a liberal education, and that correct sentiments should be instilled into the mind.

11. At the outset of life, when reason and experience are necessarily limited, almost every object appears clothed in vivid hues; earth appears a paradise, and its inhabitants little short of perfect. As man advances, as he becomes acquainted with the world, how are all these visions scattered to the winds! He beholds the devastations occasioned by baneful passions, and witnesses, with horror and dismay, the wretched occupants of this beauteous globe immolating each other on the altars of superstition, avarice, and ambition. Starting from the dream of his youth, he turns disgusted from the loathsome scene, retires to commune with himself, to ponder over the causes that involve humanity in so great misery and folly, and which causes he finds to exist in the ignorance of the mass of mankind, and the advantage taken of it by crafty men to sacrifice the interests of the many to the cupidity and arrogance of the few.

12. We can neither form our judgments correctly, nor deliberate fairly, if we do not consult different opinions, and divest ourselves of every kind of awe and prejudice in considering them.

13. Though our existence is but mortal, the praises of our virtues, and a celebrated name, cause us, in some sort, to partake of immortality.

14. We should not be afraid of travelling abroad to seek the

society of those from whom useful knowledge may be learned. Merchants boldly encounter the dangers of the seas to increase their fortunes; would it not be shameful pusillanimity in a young man to decline a voyage for the purpose of extending his information?

15. We should not unnecessarily encounter dangers; but if exposure to the perils of war become unavoidable, our honour, then, should be our chief concern.

16. Every thing is unstable. Were this truth always impressed on our minds, we should never allow ourselves to be transported with joy in prosperity, nor to be entirely depressed by our grief in misfortune; in good or bad fortune, we should neither be elated nor afflicted beyond measure; nor should we ever expose our joy or sorrow to the public observation.

17. It is strange that while we take so great care to conceal our wealth, we should be so prone to act with indiscretion by betraying the emotions we undergo.

18. In deliberating on the past, we should derive lessons for the future; our past experience will enable us the more competently to meet the exigencies of the future.

19. All men join in the pursuit of happiness, but few succeed in the chase; each one has his particular object; a few discern rightly the end they propose to themselves for attainment; but most run in such an opposite course that they miss their mark entirely.

20. A wise man does not lose his time in poring over that which he knows already; he exercises his own judgment; in his cogitations he does not presume to foretel the future, but is convinced that what shall happen can only be the subject of conjecture, and that circumstances alone can determine the course of events. Past experience is the only means by the aid of which opinions may be formed of what shall happen on succeeding occasions.

21. In a republic, such laws and usages as are found to be defective or vicious should be altered and reformed; foreign codes, if they cannot be improved upon, should be adopted; just, useful, and consistent laws will be as little likely to occasion dissensions amongst the citizens, as calculated to remove every cause for individual or party grievance and dissatisfaction.

22. The exercise of tyranny will inevitably bring on its evils, and eventually the injuries that have been endured will be avenged on the oppressors. The power of a tyrant is as heavy a burden on himself as on those he oppresses.

23. It is even more incumbent on nations to adhere to honour and good faith than on individuals. Death may happen to a wicked person before the consequences of his misconduct may befall him; instead of which, the permanency that in some degree pertains to nations admits of their injustice being punished sooner or later.

24. A people's meanness of spirit is not less evident in their mode of deliberating about engaging in a war than in the manner in which war itself is conducted by them. Fortune has the greatest share

in deciding a battle ; the resolutions of a republic announce its real character.

25. That which characterises a flourishing state is not the beauty of its cities, nor their immense populations, but the excellence and wisdom of its administration. A capable legislature is, for a republic, what reason is to man : it finds resources in every emergency, prevents distress, and insures prosperity. The citizens, the officers, and the laws, are formed in accordance with its influence, and the happiness of the people depends on the virtue of the executive.

26. Do not decline to hold an office which elevates you above others in authority, but in the exercise of power display yourself just towards every one ; and it will then appear that weakness does not enter into your character, but that you are actuated by a spirit of equity.

27. He who holds an office should be careful not to employ vicious subordinates, as it is very certain that their bad conduct will be imputed to him.

28. When you quit your charge, let it be with approbation rather than with wealth.

29. An employment that is respectable should be preferred to one that is more lucrative ; the esteem of the public is better than mere wealth.

30. The object of those who are invested in office should not be the discovery of some source of emolument which those whom they have succeeded had overlooked ; but to examine whether any public interest of essential importance had escaped their vigilance.

31. The deeds of ancestors may be honourable for such of their descendants as are bent on emulating their career ; but they load those with shame who, by their profligacy, dishonour so noble an origin.

32. In general, a son who treads in the steps of an estimable parent is not honoured so much as he who has had a wicked and worthless father, but manifests an opposite character himself.

33. When it is as difficult for those who have been convicted of crime to obtain pardon, as for the culpable to go unnoticed, then vice disappears, and the manners become pure. When the tribunals err through too much lenity, those best disposed will be in danger of soon becoming perverted.

34. Rather than covet the lot of him whose riches are immense, we should desire the satisfactions of him who has done nothing for which to reproach himself : a conscience void of offence causes our days to glide along most happily.

35. We should not fancy that vice would answer our purpose better than virtue.

36. Do not unto others that which you would not they should do to you : you will conquer anger if you behave yourself towards offenders as you would have others behave themselves toward you when you transgress.

37. In your most secret actions suppose that you have all the world as witnesses.

38. Esteem is best merited by avoiding to do ourselves what we would blame in others.

39. By avoiding in our conduct whatever is crafty and deceptive, and by acting always in an open and frank manner, we shall deprive calumny of its means of annoying us.

40. Avoid giving the least occasion for the imputations of calumny ; most people judge merely from vulgar report, without informing themselves of the facts.

41. Whoever has been deceitful, and has abused the confidence placed in him, must be regarded with displeasure, as one who has dishonoured himself ; such a man necessarily passes the residue of his life in uneasiness and mortification ; he can claim the respect of none, and is alike distrustful of his friends and his foes.

42. In order to be still more forcibly determined towards an estimable course of life, we should consider that true enjoyment can only be found in such a course. In a state of idleness and profligacy, and devoted solely to sensual gratifications, our pleasure is closely attended by pain ; in commencing with the one, we end with the other ; instead of which, the regularity and prudent attention attending the practice of virtue, are always recompensed by solid benefits and pure delight : the pleasure succeeds the pain, if any.

43. When we have been known to pride ourselves upon the correctness of our conduct, we shall not be able to deviate from propriety without incurring general reproach. A most enviable attainment !

44. He who would value himself on his honour should be so punctual in all his engagements, that more reliance should be placed on his simple word than on the oath of another.

45. However estimable he may be, who is well disposed from temperament and education, we should still more highly esteem him who has attained that disposition by reflection and principle. The man who is merely constitutionally virtuous may change from caprice ; but when to good inclinations is joined the conviction that moral excellence is the great object of worth, it may be presumed that there will seldom be any deviation from rectitude.

46. To be moderate, it is requisite that we sacrifice our inordinate desires. We are so prone to indulge in false hopes, and so covetous of gain, that the wealthiest persons are dissatisfied with their fortunes ; and, in endeavouring to add to their possessions, they often expose themselves to the loss of the property they had acquired.

47. Pleasure is a good when it is approvable ; any deviation from this rule makes it an evil.

48. We should be polished in our manners and liberal in our opinions.

49. We should avoid whatever may display haughtiness, and attend with civility to what may be addressed to us. Loftiness and disdain

are revolting even to slaves; all hearts are conciliated by politeness and affability.

50. Politeness forbids our being ill-humoured and captious; it is as far from affecting a grave air in the company of those who laugh, as from laughing in the presence of those who speak seriously: unseasonable behaviour is always displeasing.

51. Rudeness of manners is as prejudicial to our own characters as to the comfort of those in whose company we may be; whereas mildness attaches every one to us.

52. We should be civil to every one, but familiar with the virtuous only.

53. Assume not a rigid and severe aspect; be satisfied with a sedate and composed appearance; the first discovers pride, the last displays prudence.

54. Indulge not in immoderate laughter, nor in unadvised language; the first betrays a want of good sense, the latter savours of folly.

55. It is never becoming to say what it would be shameful to do.

56. It is as well not to be talking too frequently with the same person, nor too long on the same subject; we tire of every thing.

57. It is better to evade joining parties where there might be inducements for drinking to excess; but if we are engaged in company, we should insist on retiring before the wine has taken serious effect. Of what extravagancies is not a man capable when intoxication has deprived him of the guidance of his reason?

58. We should prize wealth not for the sake of accumulation, but to make a good use of it: he who heaps together riches without knowing how to enjoy them, is as contemptible as he who should buy horses at a great expense without being able to ride.

59. In our expenses, there is a distinction between necessities and superfluities; the real possession and use of wealth consists in satisfying our wants and supplying the enjoyments of life.

60. You will never practice disinterestedness if you deem that a gain which fills your purse, rather than that by which your credit is extended.

61. We should regard great wealth only as it serves to bear great losses, or as a means for assisting our friends in their necessities: beyond this we should indulge but a moderate attachment to riches.

62. We should be content with our actual condition, without, however, neglecting to improve it, if in our power.

63. Misfortune is not a reproach; results are deceptive; the issue of every operation is uncertain.

64. Poverty, when irreproachable, is preferable to ill-gotten pelf.

65. Envy not the fortunes of the wicked who prosper; but rather prefer the lot of the good who are worthy of a better condition.

66. A well-bred man obliges us as much by his manners as by his services; he avoids imitating a kind of friends who wound our feelings, even while they are doing us a kind office; he forbears using that

tone of reproach and reprimand which can only mortify our sensibility.

67. Mild language will always be found preferable to harshness : he who has been offended by words, often avenges himself by deeds.

68. Fawners and deceivers are alike odious ; if we regard those as our best friends who flatter us in our faults, we shall find no one who, to correct our errors, will run the risk of incurring our dislike.

69. Censuring, with the design to mortify, is very different from that suggestion of our errors which it is the office of friendship to give ; and we should judge differently of the same language if delivered with contrary intentions.

70. Most men are more displeased with him who reprehends their faults, than with him who has been the occasion of their errors.

71. In our dress, we should consult for propriety rather than for elegance : pride delights in a vain ostentation : good sense displays only a becoming decency.

72. It may suffice to pay reasonable attention to our persons ; but we should be very careful in cultivating our minds.

73. When we give, we should not regard ourselves as making a sacrifice to duty, but as merely exercising the pleasure of benevolence by which we are actuated.

74. Relieve the worthy in their distress ; liberality, well applied, constitutes the treasury of the benevolent man.

75. Kindness shown to us in circumstances of real distress we remember the longest.

76. It is usual to be more gratified by receiving an unexpected legacy, than by succeeding to a possession we had a claim to inherit.

77. By obliging the worthy our favours are a treasure. Showing kindness to the wicked is like feeding strange dogs, that will not bark the less at us than at others ; the bad, alike treat ill those who have been serviceable to them and those who have injured them.

78. Though it is right that we should be distrustful of bad men, yet we ought to place confidence in the good ; but a secret should never be entrusted to those who have not the same interest in keeping it as ourselves.

79. Neither abet nor defend a bad action ; for it will be believed that you would yourself be capable of doing what you would justify in another.

80. To neglect improving our minds is to omit taking the measures best calculated for rendering us good and happy.

81. If we would become learned we must assiduously apply ourselves to study.

82. If we occupy our leisure in listening to those who are well-informed, we shall, by that means, acquire without difficulty, what cost them much time and labour to learn.

83. We should not consider those as learned who argue with subtilty on frivolous subjects, but those who are able to discuss important questions with eloquence ; not those whose minds are led to change

with the turn of every humour, but those who are ever able equally well to support a sound argument.

84. A solid, just, and rational discourse, is an indication of an upright and sincere mind. It is by aid of language that men are brought clearly to see a hidden reason, and convinced of the truth they had previously scrupled to admit.

85. How flat are some speeches in the reading, which sounded well in delivery. Much of the success of a speaker depends on the temporary excitement of those whom he addresses. A speech delivered is generally received more favourably than a published address : the one is regarded as the offspring of the occasion and of exigency, the other as dictated by interest or by vanity.

86. Before rising to speak, we should consider of what we are about to attempt ; the tongue often outstrips reflection.

87. We should speak only on those occasions when we are well acquainted with our subject, or when silence would be improper.

88. To compose the eulogy of extraordinary virtue is not less difficult than to speak in the praise of but ordinary merit ; in the one case, deeds are wanting for the oration ; in the other, language is inadequate to the subject.

89. In bodily exercises, we should rather practice those which suffice for the preservation of our health, than adopt those which would be more calculated to increase our strength ; nor should we even so far prolong the former as to be obliged to desist by fatigue.

90. Our behaviour towards our parents should be such as we would wish that of our own children to be towards us at some future time.

91. Our affection should be shown by deeds rather than by words.

92. We should be as particular in forming attachments, as constant in adhering to them ; it is as disgraceful to be always changing our friends, as to possess none.

93. Previously to our forming an intimacy with another, we should learn how he acted towards his former friends ; for, it is not to be expected that his conduct towards us will be different from that towards them.

94. Test your friends without compromising yourself. If they are faithful to your confidence, you will be assured of their worth ; if they prove false, you will have suffered no injury from them.

95. When it happens that we may wish to consult the opinion of our friends upon a subject respecting which we do not choose to be entirely confidential, we can speak of the circumstances as though they regarded a third person, and as an affair that does not relate to our own concerns ; by this means we shall be able to obtain their sentiments without committing ourselves.

96. The true criterion of friendship, is adversity.

97. If it be shameful to be overcome by our enemy in a contest, we should deem it no less shameful to be outdone by our friend in kindness.

98. Recognize as true friends those who sympathize with you in your misfortunes, but as still more true those who are not hurt at your success; there are many who will participate in the griefs of their friends, but who will not be able to conceal their chagrin at their prosperity.

99. Before adopting the advice of any one, we should learn how he has acted for himself; he who has not managed his own affairs well will not be likely to guide those of another person better.

100. We shall be enabled the better to bear our own misfortunes by reflecting on the greater wretchedness of many others, and by recollecting the mortal condition of our existence.

101. If we habituate ourselves to voluntary exertion, we shall be the better prepared to undergo fatigue when it is unavoidable.

102. Though success depends upon circumstances, yet it behoves us to form prudent plans.

103. We should found our hopes of success on the management of our affairs, and the prudence of our arrangements, rather than count on availing ourselves of the errors and oversights of those with whom we may have to deal; the advantage we derive from another's neglect and imprudence cannot be of great extent, and subjects us to mortifying retaliations; whereas, the success we owe to ourselves has a solid foundation, and is less liable to interruption.

104. We are generally disposed to act with caution in endeavouring to gain our point, when we have to do with such as stand on their own guard; while, on the other hand, every one makes the most out of such as are inattentive to their own interests.

105. Be assured, that what has been obtained dishonestly will be an incumbrance rather than a source of enjoyment.

106. We should be slow in resolving, but quick in executing.

107. Nothing has so great a tendency to incline us to mature our deliberations, as reflecting on the inconveniences that have resulted from rash resolves.

CHAPTER XV.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL SENTIMENTS OF LUCRETIIUS.

1. Few have sufficient knowledge and firmness to relinquish all thoughts of surviving their mortality: men are ignorant on the subject, and imagine that some sense of their existence will remain after death: with such pertinacity do they cling to the frail body that is about to be consigned to the grave.

2. Whatever has changed its form has undergone dissolution; the former form has disappeared: in fact, certain bodies are only distributed amongst other bodies, and thus their organization and identity are destroyed.

3. In the slow lapse of time even the aspect of the world changes ; no one thing remains perpetually the same.

4. All that our senses behold—the sky, the earth, and the sea—all is as nothing, if we attempt to compare it with the boundless immensity—the infinity.

5. All ideas of reality or truth are derived from the senses.

6. Do we not see that all which nature requires, is a body exempt from pain, and a sane mind—a mind freed from terrors and anxieties ?

7. *Fear first formed gods.*

8. Do we not see that men are always in search after something, without knowing what it is they desire ; and that they are continually stirring, as if they could, by incessant movement, free themselves from the uneasiness to which their ignorance subjects them ?

9. If our minds are not well regulated, to what troubles and what perils are we not exposed in spite of ourselves ? To what corroding reflections is that man a prey who is subjected to his passions ! What terrors agitate him ! And into what an abyss of misery is he plunged by his own depravity, his insolence, and his indolence !

10. A man's greatest riches consist in his ability to live upon little with a contented mind.

11. Licentiousness is a source from which flows so bitter a stream, that it destroys the flowers of pleasure.

12. To the attraction between the sexes we owe the light of day ; without it there would be nothing charming—nothing amiable.

13. The best remedy against the uneasy passion of love is to engage in some active pursuit ; or

“ At busy hearts, in vain Love's arrows fly—
Dimm'd, scorn'd, and impotent his torches lie.”

14. In his poem, Lucretius not only controverts all the popular notions of heathenism, but even that point which is fundamental in every system of religious faith—the existence of a great first cause.

CHAPTER XVI.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL PRECEPTS OF PHOCYLIDES.

1. Unhappiness is common to all men ; life is a wheel ; and pleasure is nothing constant.

2. Be vain neither of riches, of strength, nor of knowledge.

3. Learn to conform to circumstances, and attempt not to sail against the wind ; misfortunes happen in a moment, and a moment supplies consolation.

4. Do not permit yourself to be depressed in adversity, nor exalted when circumstances seem favourable ; in life, mistrust is often necessary when appearances are most secure.

5. Be not troubled about past evils ; it is impossible that what has already happened should be recalled.

6. Eat, drink, sleep, and talk, with restriction ; practice moderation in all things ; in every thing avoid excess.

7. Thoroughly eradicate an evil propensity ; cure the wound before it becomes gangrenous.

8. Beware of all extremes ; in every thing beauty results from just proportions.

9. Every thing in nature is linked together by an eternal order or relation.

10. Not content with being just thyself, do not permit injustice.

11. Love thy family, and cause peace to reign in it.

12. Display not to thy children a severe countenance ; let thy kindness gain their attachment.

13. Sully not the honour of thy spouse ; fix not a withering stigma upon thy children.

14. Contract no illicit and scandalous connexion ; deliver not thyself up to infamous attachments.

15. Beware of espousing a wicked woman ; and let not the fatal thirst for a portion render thee the slave of a wife that is unworthy of thee.

16. Persist not in celibacy, if thou wouldst not end thy days abandoned by all.

17. How pleasant—how happy a state—when a prudent wife is loved by her husband, even to the last moment of existence.

18. Give place to old age, and dispute not the honours due to venerable years.

19. It is very satisfactory to acquire a sincere friend in the person of him who had been your enemy.

20. Admit not fawning parasites into your society, they only prize your good cheer, purchase a good dinner with their vile sycophancy, and easily become your enemies ; they are never satisfied.

21. Yield not thy credence too readily ; first consider what object he may have who addresses thee.

22. Let thy judgment controul thy tongue ; keep thy secret in thy own bosom.

23. Conciliation produces peace and satisfaction ; quarrels and wranglings only lead to new contests.

24. Anger is a momentary sensation, but when excited, becomes fury.

25. Learn to restrain thy hand and to bridle thine anger.

26. Gird on the sword to defend thyself, and not to assault.

27. Abstain from every shameful act, and adhere to temperance ; be not led away by dangerous examples, and repel injustice only by equity.

28. Courage is injurious in the wicked ; but it is of great service to those whose object it is to do good.

29. Show the same civility to strangers as you would to your fellow-townsmen.

30. It is better to set a frugal and welcome table before thy guest instantly, than to keep him waiting a long time, in order to provide for him a splendid repast, perhaps grudgingly.

31. Social conviviality seems most pleasurable when the exhilarating glass circulates around.

32. Waste not thy benevolence on the ungrateful ; it is like sowing seed on the surface of the sea.

33. Owe thy means of subsistence to thyself, and never obtain it by submitting to ignominy.

34. Hast thou learned no trade ? Then go and dig the ground ; exert thyself, and thou wilt find something to do ; show thyself industrious, and thou wilt be at no loss for employment.

35. Without labour nothing prospers with man : industry adds even to virtue.

36. Make a sober use of the means thou possessest, and not condemn thyself to a foolish and wretched indigence by extravagance.

37. A man has peculiar advantages for attaining the highest excellence of his nature, when he is above the necessity of labouring for the means of subsistence.

38. If thou aboundest in riches, share them with the unfortunate, and let the indigent have their part.

39. Relieve the necessitous applicant at once ; tell him not “ to call again to-morrow ; ” and remember that with a generous hand the worthy indigent should be assisted.

40. Guide into the right road the traveller who has gone astray ; and snatch from the fury of the waves the wretch that is about to perish.

41. Navigation is perilous : take pity on him who is so miserable as to have suffered shipwreck.

42. Serve as a guide to the blind ; open thy door to the exile.

43. Avarice is the mother of all crimes ; it is by thirst for money that men are enticed and misled.

44. The man who is wilfully unjust is an atrocious villain. We should not thus condemn him who is impelled by his necessities to an act of injustice ; but search well the heart of him with whom thou hast ought to do.

45. To live with the culpable is to expose thyself to die with the criminal.

46. Imagine no plots ; imbrue not thy hands in blood.

47. Learn to live on what thou hast honestly acquired ; despise wealth gained by iniquity ; contented with what thou hast, abstain from making free with what does not belong to thee.

48. Intrude not on the premises of thy neighbour, and respect his property ; forbearance is good in all things ; violence is to be condemned in every instance.

49. The thief and the receiver are alike guilty ; both are objects of public execration.

50. Injure not the crop of the husbandman.

51. Deprive not the labourer of his hire ; beware of oppressing the poor.

52. In all thou sayest, adhere to truth ; permit not thy mouth in lying.

53. Have not one statement in thy heart, and another on thy lips.

54. Hold false witness in horror ; let thy tongue be the organ of truth.

55. If thou swearest falsely, even thy ignorance will not serve thee as an excuse.

56. Respect chastity ; never violate thy trust.

57. Regard the purity of tender maids ; do not even take them rudely by the hand.

58. Such are the laws of morality. Conform thy conduct thereto, and happiness will attend thee even to the close of life.

CHAPTER XVII

SELECTIONS FROM THE DIALOGUES OF PLATO.

1. Truth is an excellent thing, and durable ; but to this we are not easily persuaded.

2. Nothing is more pleasing to a sound mind than to speak and hear truth.

3. Happy is he who, even in his latter days, is able to perceive the truth, and arrive at wisdom *

4. There are infinite generations of men, and infinite accidents happening daily to them.

5. The material world is infinite and eternal ; the universe was not called into being from non-entity.

6. From nothing, nothing can proceed.

7. The living spring from the former living, or the dead ; and those who live, or will hereafter live, will be the future dead.

* Under existing disadvantages, the formation of a single valuable and philosophical character must be a rarity. On his entrance into active life, a man listens to the opinions in general circulation, and the current of fashionable applause or censure will wash away the very best previous instruction ; his estimate of virtue and vice will become altogether debased, and adjusted to the reigning errors, even on the supposition that his private education beforehand had been excellent. But this, in all probability, may not have been the case ; for the instructors of youth are obliged, by their own interest, to inculcate lessons conformable to the dominant opinions, and to bestow upon these precepts the name of wisdom ; his notions of truth and justice will, by these means, be perverted from the earliest period of infancy, and the whole tone of his morality will become nothing but a wretched flattery of the actual preferences of the vulgar. All this is still further confirmed and enforced by the tenor of despotic laws, which inflict disgrace and punishment upon the dissident. Thus the man of surpassing energy and abilities, who, under a just and natural system, would have been foremost in promoting the liberties of his country, becomes only the instrument of its deeper injury.

8. After death you will be nothing at all.

9. The proper science of man, or morals, consists in knowing how to think and live according to nature.

10. There is one unvarying standard which serves as the guide, the measure, and the connecting link of a philosopher's researches, and to which all the particular knowledge he acquires becomes subservient. The constant search after general principles constitutes an important distinction between him and other men, who never ascend above the fact of the moment, nor submit their opinions to any test or comparison.

11. The wise man will only value riches, and other external means of enjoyment as instruments of virtue; for, in every condition, he is happy in the possession of a mind accommodated to nature; every virtue becoming a conformity to nature, and every vice a deviation from it.

12. The object of our natural desires is to obtain what is requisite for satisfying the wants of the body and the desires of the mind.

13. Personal endowments are—health, comeliness, and a happy disposition.

14. Worldly advantages are—friends, riches, knowledge, and all that can procure us satisfaction and pleasure.

15. The first and foremost of all benefits is a good education. This indeed, taken singly, would be insufficient; but without it, all other advantages would be vain and ineffectual.

16. Correct intellectual attainments are—whatever enables the mind to apprehend, to be attached to, to be affected by, and to embrace that which is good and true. Nature supplies imagination and memory, which depend properly on the force of the capacity; and education furnishes whatever can be acquired by study and the exercise of reason.

17. Advantages of fortune are subordinate to those of the mind; and when we possess the latter, we are enabled to make a better use of the former. The primary virtues are—prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice. Prudence respects the choice of good, and avoidance of evil, by which we act wisely on all occasions; temperance regards the government of the appetites and desires, enables us to regulate the passions, and it restrains us within the bounds of moderation and a well-regulated life; fortitude is the firm endurance of what is commonly esteemed misfortune, and it encourages us to persevere in our undertakings, in spite of fears, dangers, and arduous difficulties; and justice consists in duly discharging the affairs of social life; and, in civil society, it secures the rights of individuals from violation.

18. Good impressions are means which may lead to virtue; good, in practice, is virtue; and this is the perfection of nature, and the most excellent of all advantages; for in this consists the happiness of life.

19. As knowledge, without virtue, ought to be deemed cunning

rather than wisdom ; so courage in encountering danger, if excited by selfish motives, and not by the public weal, deserves the name of audacity, rather than of fortitude.

20. To fulfil the duties which nature and humanity impose, there exists an indispensable obligation for mental exertion ; an obligation that requires us to shun indolence, to despise culpable indulgences ; and that necessarily induces us to support all kinds of endurance, and even to support suffering for the sake of what is just and true : hence results honour, friendship, and confidence, which are preferable to all the pleasures and luxuries of sensual life.

21. Friendship comprises charity and humanity, by which is understood the needful rendering of mutual service and convenience : these are performed by means of our purses, our personal efforts, our talents, and our counsels ; pecuniary relief is supplied to those who are in want ; personal aid rescues those who are exposed to assaults and perils ; by our talents we are enabled to inform those who know less than ourselves, and our advice may be of service to those who are involved in social difficulty.

22. Natural friendship is that kindred affection which inclines the members of a family to mutual affection ; social friendship springs from the regard contracted by acquaintance, and by the reciprocal performance of kind offices ; and friendships of hospitality are those attachments resulting from the entertainment of strangers, or being entertained by them.

23. The likeliest method for becoming happy, is adopted by him who manages to derive from his own resources, the means for being independent of fortune, or the caprices of others.

24. Love showers benignity upon the world ; in its presence, all harsh passions are hushed and still ; it is the author of all soft affections, and the expeller of all ungentle thoughts : it is the parent of grace and delicacy, of gentleness and delight, of persuasion and desire ; the ornament and impulse of all things—the best, the loveliest.

25. One of the greatest obstacles to a man's felicity is his avarice ; the desire to possess himself of the property of others : the observance of the following law is, therefore, of supreme importance—thou shalt not take nor covet what belongs to another, and thou shalt not remove that which was not placed by thyself.

26. The smart a man feels after having done wrong, should serve as a preventive against his erring in future, rather than be regarded as a punishment for what has already happened ; because that which is past cannot be recalled, but that which otherwise might possibly take place in future, may, through compunction, be avoided.

27. As injustice generally prevails in trade, it ought to be impressed upon the feelings of every merchant, that it is improper to ask two prices, or to commend falsely that which is exposed for sale.

28. We should so live that none will believe those who speak ill of us.

29. Upon his first steps in life depend a man's success and future

consequence : we must first establish our reputation in the world, and we shall not encounter many difficulties in our after progress.

30. Under misfortune, we should not, like a child that has fallen and presses his hand against the part that is hurt, lose our time in lamentation ; but we should rather accustom our minds to apply promptly a remedy for the mischief, and set about erecting anew the structure that had been laid prostrate.

31. We should guard against that austerity and haughtiness which a life of solitude usually occasions.

32. A studious man may be as secure from interruption or temptation, within the precincts of a city, as in a hut on the top of an isolated mountain.

33. Passions and vices are easy of imitation, by reason of their prevalence ; but the cool, uniform, and simple character of virtue, is very difficult to be drawn, so as to interest or delight a mixed assemblage of men.

34. Power and opportunity must concur with ability and justice, to effect anything great in a political capacity.

35. Rulers seem to suppose, that governments were instituted for their own exclusive benefit ; and they affect to regard the fact, that the happiness of society in general was the object, as merely an absurd notion.

36. " When," said he, " I explained the principles of philosophy and humanity to Dion, I little thought I was insensibly opening the way for the subversion of tyranny, and the establishing of the liberties of mankind."

37. In a nation where there a great number of paupers, fatal revolutions will happen ; for, as the people have nothing to lose, they will seize opportunities for abating their miseries, and bettering their condition.

38. Some one remarking that he seemed as desirous to learn himself as to teach others, asked him how long he intended to remain a pupil ? " As long," replied he, " as I shall not be ashamed to improve in wisdom and goodness."

CHAPTER XVIII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL SENTIMENTS OF PLUTARCH.

1. Those who are incapable of modifying or forming principles for the conduct of life, are like infirm persons, who can bear neither heat nor cold.

2. True fortitude consists in the conquest of inordinate appetites by reason.

3. The surest means of securing ourselves from the feelings of disappointment is to be well aware of the inconstancy of fortune and to

be prepared against all its caprices : not only are we ourselves mortal, but every thing which surrounds us is transitory and perishable.

4. The stream of generation flows on without ceasing, and will ever continue to flow ; it is the same with the stream of destruction.

5. The state of man after his death, is the same as it was before his birth ; thus there can be found little distinction between non-existence and existing no longer.

6. The entire destruction of the body and mind is no deprivation ; for it is at the same time the cessation of consciousness.

7. Philosophy alone is the remedy for all the infirmities and all the diseases of the mind.

8. Philosophy, by making us acquainted with the natural causes of things, relieves us from wonder and from the stupor of ignorance.

9. Those embarrass the path to philosophy with insurmountable difficulties, who form their principles not according to facts, but would force facts to conform with their hypotheses ; although by their nature it is impossible they should agree.

10. The exercise of our judgment amounts to little, unless our conduct is influenced by our judgment ; it is of little avail to reason, unless our reasoning produces correct actions.

11. He who is devoted to excellence, contents himself with the testimony he has in his own bosom, that, in his conduct, he is influenced by the precepts of virtue.

12. Does virtue render her votaries wretched ? No : against them retributive justice neither sends troops of robbers, storms of hail, nor wicked judges ; but the rich, the prosperous, and the fortunate, are consumed by their lusts, inflamed by their passions, alarmed by their superstition, and tortured by their envy.

13. There is no condition of life in which goodness is not attended by comfort ; but, with the wicked, pomp, grandeur, magnificence, do but bring on a disgusting and insupportable melancholy.

14. Men too often disregard what is pleasant in life, and dwell only on its bitterness.

15. We would never complain of the events of life, if we considered with what fortitude and cheerfulness they are endured by others.

16. There are people who regard not the benefits enjoyed by themselves, but keep their views fixed on the advantages of others only : these are the envious. In order to possess a contented mind, it behoves us, at least, to consider how many there are that are more destitute than ourselves.

17. The ambitious are exasperated with jealousy against those who are more successful than themselves.

18. Avarice is a singular vice ; the object of all the other passions is satisfaction ; but this torments itself without ceasing, and never hopes to be satisfied.

19. Envy is not confined to those who adopt the same professions, and follow the same pursuits in life ; but the rich envy the learned ; the learned, the rich, &c.

20. It is not a fact that the mind is always more tranquil in seclusion; if this were the case, calmness, instead of being an acquisition of men, would be the happy lot of women, who would enjoy the peaceful repose of their homes, occupied solely in attentions to their domestic concerns; but their retreat is molested by trouble, agitation, jealousies, envy; and it is the resort of superstition.

21. It is not by the greater or lesser number of avocations; it is by virtue or vice the mind either secures tranquillity or is plunged into distraction.

22. Changing our mode of life is equally inadequate to relieving us from agitations; the cause of which exists in our ignorance, that prevents us from being resigned to the vicissitude of events.

23. The man who is subjected by his passions will not be capable of attending to the counsels that may be given him.

24. Weak minds are most susceptible of provocation; an irritable man ought not to be too ready to punish.

25. In some respects, rage is terrible; but it is ridiculous on other accounts; of all the passions, this draws on us most aversion and contempt.

26. Sensible men, lest their passions might be perturbed, ought to fortify themselves by such reasonings as are calculated to counteract their force, in order that they may be prepared with the means of resistance beforehand, should it happen to them to be in the way of excitement.

27. It is easy to perceive the defects of others; but this is of no advantage to us, unless we profit thereby to correct similar faults in ourselves, or to keep us on our guard against them.

28. He who reprehends in others the vices with which he is himself infected, draws attention to his own defects, and the blame he casts on others rebounds on himself.

29. Every man commits faults; but he may be deemed incorrigible who refuses to take in good part the counsels and remonstrances that are offered him.

30. It is by the charms of his character that a man diffuses joy and pleasure on those around him.

31. The different situations in life are conformable to the characters of those by whom they are filled.

(Every situation of life serves for the formation of character.)—*Paley.*

32. We should derive from philosophy all the assistance it can lend us against the vehemence of our characters.

33. All advantages happen not to every man; and the great talent is self-knowledge.

34. Obscurity will shield us from the shafts of envy.

35. We ought to be prepared against the vicissitudes of life; if we are incapable of resignation, we shall not even know how to support good fortune with prudence and moderation.

36. Fools neglect and despise the benefits they possess; they turn

all their views towards the future : wise men derive present pleasure from the thoughts of what they have enjoyed, and even lost advantages are reflected on without dissatisfaction.

37. Our envious and discontented tempers, prevent us from enjoying those advantages we possess, and we persist in the indulgence of hopes which ought never to have entered into our conceptions.

38. Some always find pretexts for complaining and repining.

39. It is folly to fret about past losses ; we should rejoice rather, that anything is left.

40. With a mild and pleasant temper, the weight of misfortune itself is rendered less onerous.

41. The man who stores his mind with salutary truths, will divest himself of pride.

42. We must first become strongly attached to virtue, before we can cease to be ambitious in respect of that to which the generality aspire.

43. To forego those things which the generality of men appreciate, though worthy of contempt, requires a strong and firm understanding.

44. That which pleases the multitude, disgusts the virtuous few.

45. To those who stand in need of our assistance, we should willingly lend all the services prudently in our power.

46. Our fortune is chequered ; we should make the good compensate for the evil.

47. A sensible man is sometimes able to derive advantages from conjunctures the most unfavourable, and to turn them to some good account.

48. If we are wise, we shall make the best of favourable opportunities, without afflicting ourselves too seriously about those that are unfavourable.

49. Nothing is more natural and honourable than a proper attention to improve our condition, provided it is accomplished by means which do not trespass upon those of others.

50. The term justice is applicable, not only to the act of rendering to others their due, but, to doing the same to ourselves and our families.

51. To neglect improving our means for supplying those things that are necessary or convenient for the uses of life, through fear of losing the little we have, would be acting a very mean and absurd part.

52. No man surely would take refuge in penuriousness, in order to guard against the loss of his small property, no more than he should remain in the unsocial state of celibacy, that he may have neither friends nor children to lose : his mind should be armed by reason against all untoward contingencies ; our fears should not wrong us, by preventing our using the means for obtaining gratifications.

53. Fortune will sometimes snatch away in an instant what it has taken a long time, and cost much labour to acquire.

54. The hopes derived from our children are remote, and very uncertain ; most parents end their days without seeing them realized.

55. We should take pains in forming the manners and characters of our children from their earliest infancy.

56. We should be particularly attentive in the choice of preceptors, so that our children should not, through our inattention, be committed to the charge of servile, vulgar, or weak men.

57. It is no small error to think that the defects of those children who seem naturally disposed to be perverse, cannot be corrected by discipline, and by taking pains to endow them with virtuous impressions; under negligent treatment, a good disposition becomes vitiated; the vices of a bad one are eradicated by careful instruction.

58. There is nothing of greater importance than to find for our children masters of unblemished characters, irreproachable morals, unobjectionable manners, and who are eminent for their knowledge; for the source and origin of every thing that is valuable in life is a good education.

59. Fathers ought not to be too harsh and severe.

60. It is better for the resentment of a parent to be sharp and severe for the moment, than to be settled and lasting; for implacability is no small proof of unnatural hatred and antipathy.

61. When parents are shameless, how can it be expected that their children will be different?

62. He who wishes to be the father of estimable children, must search for a wife worthy of being their mother.

63. Those who marry women much richer than themselves, are not the husbands of their spouses, but slaves to the fortunes they have brought.

64. Women who, by dictation and violence, attempt to restrain their husbands from dissipation and improvident habits, only irritate them and render them more perverse; but if they endeavour gently to persuade them, they more easily obtain their purpose.

65. Love partakes so much of modesty, confidence, and fidelity, that it awakens these virtues in the bosoms of those who were previously strangers to them.

66. Those who are influenced by love are freed from all other constraints.

67. The mind has not only a principle of sense, of understanding, of memory; but also of love.

68. A woman should have no male friends but those who are the friends of her husband.

69. Those who seek a host of friends, know not that they will find a swarm of enemies; and they will soon learn, that the animosity or hatred is a much more active principle than the good-will of friendship.

70. Friendship is weakened and extinguished by dividing it amongst too great a number of persons.

71. What satisfaction can result from the indulgence of a taste for forming continually new acquaintances—from a facility of relinquishing former attachments, and of being always charmed with our latest

acquired friends? The consequence is, that for the sake of making a fresh intimacy, we lose those friends on whom we might have depended.

72. Nothing is more contemptible, nor a greater proof of a light character, than a disposition to form hasty friendships; and yet, nothing is more common: the consideration that friendship must arise from congeniality of mind should be the greatest motive against contracting it too suddenly.

73. In order that our friendships should be permanent, it is necessary to employ much time in estimating their worth.

74. Our judgment respecting our friends should be formed *before*, and not *after* we have become attached to them.

75. It is not without considerable unpleasantness that we can manage to rid ourselves of a disagreeable acquaintance.

76. In circumstances where the valuable services of friendship would be acceptable, the discovery is melancholy that we have had none but false friends.

77. No one likes to find himself neglected by one whom he has regarded as a friend.

78. If we look into our own defects, our vices, and foibles, we shall be convinced that the friend we need is not he who will commend us, but he who will speak freely, and by whose suggestions and remonstrances we may derive benefit.

79. A friend is not wanted to be one's counterpart, and to repeat all our emotions; but we need the friend who will accompany us in our researches for truth, and aid us in rectifying our judgments.

80. True friendship requires virtue to make it honourable, freedom to make it pleasant, and kind offices to render it useful.

81. It is not by rigour and austerity that friendship becomes respectable; it should be attended by propriety and dignity; but with these, mildness and kindness are not inconsistent.

82. We should not at once regard him who praises us as a flatterer; commendations are not incompatible with friendship; it may be employed occasionally with advantage as well as reproach.

83. The sycophant sufficiently announces himself as a flatterer; but the flattery against which we should be on our guard, is that which does not so readily discover itself as such.

84. Flattery has the quality of fitting itself like an elastic dress; it readily assumes the form and appearance of what it affects to be: as it is by false imitations that the flatterer deceives us and disguises himself, so it behoves us to employ those tests by which he may be discovered and exposed.

85. When the purse is empty and the kitchen cold, then the voice of flattery is no longer heard.

86. If sincere friends are desirable at any time, it is when we are in prosperity.

87. It is with sincerity as with some medicines; employed incessantly, it afflicts and give pain, without being attended by any

benefit: we should know how and when to make our candour a kindness.

88. We should concede to our enemies the merits and honours they justly deserve, and this will prove that our complaints against them are not dictated by hatred, but that we have just reasons for being offended on account of their injustice or impropriety towards us.

89. It is better not to be too sharp observers, nor too searching for faults. In advanced life the sight is weak, and the hearing obtuse, and occasion may be taken of these infirmities skilfully to affect not to notice things which are seen very plainly, and to have no knowledge of what has been heard perfectly well.

90. "My conscience torments me for having acted criminally; 'tis a corroding ulcer in my flesh;" remorse never quits us; it rankles and preys upon our constitution, and racks and tortures our minds.

91. It is not without reason that we regard those as impudent who extol themselves; because it would become them to be modest, even though others should deign to commend them.

92. Those who show themselves greedy of praise, give room for its being suspected that they feel themselves greatly deficient in laudable qualities.

93. To talk of one's self as being some one of great importance, and as though one had a right to assume the superiority over others, is justly deemed a rudeness, because it is an impertinence to every one.

94. It is allowable, however, to affirm our own merits, when we are attacked by calumny, or if we are unjustly accused.

95. It is impolite to contradict the commendations we hear given to others; nevertheless, if it happen that we know these praises to be misplaced, and might have a pernicious tendency, it is then our duty to set those right who hear them.

96. If a question is put to another in our presence, it is unmannerly to put ourselves forward to reply.

97. He who snatches the word from another's mouth, to speak himself, is impertinent, even if he explain the subject correctly; if he does not, he is ridiculous.

98. The mind should neither be too bold, nor too timid; for the one produces rashness and imprudence, and the other falls into servility: the great art is, to preserve a medium in all things.

99. Let us not be imitators of those who attempt to correct their timidity by impudence; their rusticity by buffoonery: their bashfulness by effrontery; and their cowardice by ferocity.

100. In order to free ourselves from diffidence, we should accustom ourselves to act on trifling subjects, and exercise ourselves frequently on occasions of minor importance.

101. It is useful to a timid man, to habituate himself to act with freedom in little matters, and not to approve too readily what is devoid of merit.

102. There is a weak sort of people, whose breeding has not sup-

plied them with a proper confidence ; but they are easily influenced, and they readily yield to whatever is proposed, and afterwards as lightly fail in their words, and belie themselves.

103. We observe many whom false shame prevents from refusing an improper request, and who thereby expose themselves to just shame and deserved reproach.

104. It may be remarked of weak people that they are aware beforehand of the inconveniences they are about to incur ; but still they have not the firmness to avoid them : compunction is not only suffered after the act is completed, but even before its commission.

105. It is not only in pecuniary matters that those who are wanting in decision are apt to err ; but, on more serious occasions, they are wanting in firmness in not adopting the determinations which reason suggests.

106. It is necessary to withstand importunity in matters of small consequence, if we wish to become capable of declining to make concessions of greater magnitude.

107. Philosophy undertakes a difficult task when she pretends to cure garrulity.

108. The fault of not being able to restrain one's tongue, arises from not being able to listen.

109. Intemperance of speech is cured with difficulty ; philosophy composes her remedy of words, but these only operate upon those who will listen ; and they are not heard by him who has no restraint upon his own tongue.

110. To hear and be heard, are two things of which a talkative man can never derive benefit : he seldom gains hearers, for every one avoids him.

111. The object of speech is to make ourselves be believed ; and no credit is given to a babbler, even when he speaks the truth.

112. Even the company of a bad man that knows how to be silent, is preferable to that of a good man who talks incessantly.

113. Curiosity is the constant companion of garrulity.

114. Curiosity becomes a vice when it is only an itching to learn what is amiss respecting others.

115. Vicious curiosity is only pleased with evils of recent occurrence ; it is necessary they should be yet fresh ; she takes delight only in promulgating new calamities.

116. We should not grow angry amidst jesting and bantering, for we make ourselves enemies thereby ; nor in discussions, because they then change into disputes ; nor in instructing, because instruction then becomes our antipathy ; nor in prosperity, because it adds to the envy with which others are filled.

117. We make a jest of those fops who are always adjusting their dress in public.

118. Most men begin to practise the art of speaking before they have been exercised in that of hearing.

119. We ought to be candid enough to extol the merits of him

who speaks, but not suffer his address to lead us into incaution ; to regard his talents with pleasure, but investigate strictly the justness of his reasoning ; not to be influenced by the authority of the speaker, but to scrutinize accurately the grounds of his argument ; the orator's object should be considered, rather than his eloquence admired.

120. Instead of being difficult, it is very easy to criticise what is spoken by another ; the difficulty lies in saying any thing better ourselves.

121. We address a prepossessed auditor, whom we can by no means please and soften ; full of pride and self-opinion, he wishes, by his disdain, to convince others that he could have advanced something far better himself.

122. He whose pride and silly ambition render him envious of another's speech, cannot give his attention to hear him.

123. Our admiration is not confined to those sentiments which are uttered in few words ; but we are even pleased with those that are expressed by means of signs, and without the aid of sounds.

124. On some occasions, no words that could be spoken would be so expressive as silence.

125. We display a contracted mind when we are unable to embrace an enlarged view of a subject ; attending only to the minor particulars, and raising questions upon every sentence and every syllable.

126. Nothing is more disagreeable than those repulsive men who are deficient in affability ; the way to become esteemed is to be able to make concessions in a dispute.

127. To confide our secrets to others is to have recourse to confidence in them, and to cease having it in ourselves.

128. In following different pursuits, we can render little professional assistance to each other ; but difference of profession prevents jealousies, and still enables us sometimes to be of mutual service.

129. To indulge our unrestrained and irrational appetites, is a kind of license which is mean and degrading ; and it is always attended by repentance.

130. A sedentary life, spent in indolence, withers both body and mind at the same time.

131. Bodily exercise ought not to be neglected ; it gives us strength, and occasions our being well constituted ; in youth, we should acquire a constitution capable of leading to old age.

132. Kindness to animals promotes humanity.

133. In generalship a second fault is inexcusable.

134. The most violent and dangerous public factions arise too often from private disputes and misunderstandings.

135. The natural right of mankind is liberty ; but we should conform to those constitutional laws that are necessary to preserve society and individuals from injustice, and for punishment of injuries committed.

CHAPTER XIX.

SELECTIONS FROM THE THOUGHTS OF PLUTARCH ON SUPERSTITION.

1. As there can be no good experienced in a state of insensibility, or non-existence, so there can be no evil; and as good and evil can only pertain to those who exist, so they can have nothing to do with those who have ceased to exist; they that are dead, therefore, are placed in the same state as that in which they were before their birth.

2. Death, to all men, is the end of life; but it is not so in the notions of the superstitious; they imagine their sensations will extend beyond animation itself; they prolong their terrors beyond the term of their existence; they contrive to associate with death the idea of sufferings which will never terminate. At the moment they are about to be relieved from all their troubles by death, they alarm themselves with ideas of pains that never will cease; the depth of their imaginary hell are present to their view; burning torrents flow before their eyes; unconsuming burnings affright their imagination; frightful darkness thickens around them; horrible spectres shock their sight; pitiable shrieks alarm their ears; judgment and torture are before them; they see the earth cleave asunder, and unfathomable gulfs complete their miseries.

3. Whoever stands in awe of gods, dreads every thing—the earth, the sea, the air, the sky, the clouds, the light, darkness, silence, dreams, &c.

4. The superstitious see horrid spectres and hideous phantoms in their sleep; their bewildered imagination creates tortures by which they are crushed and torn; they fancy they hear commands as dreadful as they are whimsical, and which they are constrained to obey.

5. A superstitious person dreads his fancied god, and yet fancies that he finds refuge in his bosom.

6. The fears derived from superstition are more causeless and stupid than those of any other kind.

7. Of all disorders of the mind, religion is that which occasions the greatest extravagance, the most inconsistent workings of the affections, opinions the most contradictory, and which clash most one with another.

8. Consider the Atheist in his trouble, and learn to respect him; he undergoes his misfortunes in silence, and seeks the means of help and consolation in himself. The conduct of the superstitious is entirely different; if he has the smallest trifle to encounter, it is the fancied divinity which pours down upon him an inexhaustable torrent of suffering; he is the object of celestial wrath; it is God who punishes him; he has but to submit to his doom, and he thinks it is merited; down he casts himself to the earth, or on his knees; with

upraised hands he beseeches his wrathful God to spare him, a poor miserable sinner.

9. Is the Atheist sick? He endeavours to ascertain if he has not committed some excess in his diet—if his conduct has not been irregular. It is in himself, and in that which surrounds him, he seeks for the cause of his indisposition. But, if the Believer is at all disordered, or if he sustains any loss of fortune, it is the visitation of heaven; it is the hand of his divinity which is heavy upon him; he would think he was striving against God, and revolting against the sentence of his heavenly Judge, if he were to regard the circumstance as merely happening in the course of nature and human relations.

10. That atheism should be deemed impiety, and that superstition should be pronounced piety, is the judgment of stupidity.

CHAPTER XX.

SELECTIONS FROM THE GOLDEN VERSES, &C., OF PYTHAGORAS.

1. Every star is a world, or mass of substantial consistency, or assemblage of the natural order of animated, vegetating, and mineral compounds in the infinite ether.

2. In the system of the universe, suns are the masses of greater magnitude, about which the lesser masses in their contiguity, or the planets, revolve.

3. The earth is a globe which admits of antipodes; it is not motionless, nor situated in the centre of the spheres; but it is one of those planets whose orbits of revolution pertain to our particular solar system.

4. The surface of the moon is diversified by mountains and valleys; the moon, as well as suns and primary planets, is habitable.

5. Mankind have ever lived, and the genus *man*, never had a beginning.

6. Death is the destiny of all men.

“What then is death, but ancient matter drest
In some new figure and a varied vest?
Thus all things are but altered: nothing dies.”

“And, as the softened wax new seals receives,
This, face assumes, and that, impression leaves;
Now called by one, now by another name,—
The form is only changed, the wax is still the same.”

7. On the extensive theatre of the world, while many struggle for the glory of a name, and most men pant after the advantages of fortune; there are a few, and indeed but a few, who are neither eager to amass wealth, nor ambitious of fame, but who are sufficiently gratified by being spectators of the interesting scene.

8. It is the province of science to be conversant with those objects that are immutable and eternal in their nature, and which, therefore, can alone properly be said to exist.

9. The end of philosophy is—to free the mind from those impediments which hinder its progress in attaining the knowledge of nature, and to raise it to the contemplation of immutable truth.

10. Through philosophy we have this advantage—to be astonished at nothing; for wonder partakes of ignorance, or arises from doubt; both of which are removed by the knowledge of the natural conditions, and by an examination into the properties of every thing.

11. All men acknowledge wisdom to be of the highest importance, and yet few endeavour to obtain it.

12. To conceive and judge aright, can only be the attribute of a few; it can only belong to those who are well-informed, and these are not many.

13. The most important branch of instruction is to inform the mind concerning good and evil.

14. The chief office of the mind is to know and contemplate.

15. It is the fault of a man, devoid of an improved understanding, to adhere to all men's opinions, especially to those which are maintained by the greater number.

16. Do that which you judge to be right, whatever the vulgar may think of you; if you despise their praise, disregard also their censure.

17. Be not intimidated by vain threats; let them not divert you from your laudable purposes.

18. If a man, after having entered into the ways of wisdom, turns aside, and forsakes them, it is in vain for him to imagine himself living; he is dead.

19. Do you find yourself attacked by lying aspersions?—Have patience; support this unpleasantness with calmness.

20. Let no person, either by his actions or discourse, lead you to say or do a thing that at some day might be prejudicial to you.

21. No enjoyment can be felt where the mind is disturbed by the consciousness of guilt, or by fears about futurity.

22. The most ample and perfect gratification is to be found in the enjoyment of moral and intellectual pleasures.

23. If you have it in your power to do good, you ought to do it; ability is here near akin to necessity: such is the rule you should follow.

24. Various and manifold are the uses of opportunity.

25. Propriety and seasonableness are the first things to be regarded in our conversation, and in our intercourse with the world.

26. In all society a due respect must be had for just subordination.

27. Politeness consists in an evenness of mind, which excludes at the same time both insensibility and too much earnestness; a quick discernment to perceive immediately the different characters of men; and by an agreeable condescension, to adapt ourselves to each man's taste; not to flatter his vanity, but to calm his passions; a forgetting

of ourselves in order to seek what may be pleasing to others, yet in so delicate a manner, as not to let them perceive that we are so employed : it knows how to contradict a man with respect, and to compliment him without adulation ; and it is equally removed from an insipid complaisance, and a low familiarity.

28. Esteem it no small part of a good education, to be able to bear with the want of it in others.

29. Seek not to shine by launching out into ill-judged expenses, as if you were ignorant of what was suitable and becoming ; neither pride yourself on excessive economy : nothing is preferable to the just medium which should be adhered to in all things.

30. Comprehend many things in few words, and not few things in many words.

31. We ought either to be silent, or to say what is better than silence.

32. To deprive wormwood of its bitterness, and to take away liberty from speech, are both alike.

33. There is less danger in throwing a stone at random than an idle word.

34. Reflect well before acting ; avoid having to blush for your folly through too great precipitation : imprudent acts or words are the province of a fool.

35. Engage in no projects that may turn to your disadvantage ; beware of entering on an affair which you will not be able to carry through ; and begin by acquiring the information necessary for your guidance.

36. Let uprightness influence you in all your actions, and be sincere in whatever you say ; let reason be your guide even in the smallest matters.

37. Rather than attempt to cover your faults with words, endeavour to amend them.

38. Do nothing mean in the presence of others, nor in secret ; let it be your chief law to respect yourself.

39. Shun ambition and vain glory, because these chiefly excite envy.

40. Avoid doing any thing that might excite envy or malice against you.

41. The desire of superfluity is foolish, because it knows no limits,

42. It is better that those with whom you are allied should respect you rather than they should fear you ; for esteem accompanies respect, but fear is attended by hatred.

43. Much discretion is necessary in the breeding and education of children : reproof and correction are only useful when they are accompanied, on the part of the parent or teacher, with evident marks of affection.

44. Let youth be trained in the best course of life, and habit will render it the most pleasant.

45. Young persons should be accustomed to restraint, in order that they may learn to submit to the authority of reason.

46. We should avoid, with our utmost care, and use our utmost endeavours to remove, sickness from the body, ignorance from the mind, predominance from the appetites, discord from our families, and excess from all things.

47. Many things, especially love, are best learned late.

48. Neglect not your health; indulge with moderation in eating, drinking, and exercise: the quantity to be prescribed is that beyond which you cannot partake with impunity.

49. Sobriety is the strength of the mind; for it preserves reason unclouded by passion.

50. No man is free who has not the command over himself, but suffers his passions to controul him.

51. The faculty of continence is better than the greatest wealth.

52. Drunkenness is the canker-worm which consumes the powers of the mind.

53. Acquire the habit of controlling your appetites, your rest, your indulgences, and your anger.

54. Let your table be frugal; banish from it all luxuries.

55. Choose that person for your friend whom you know to be the most worthy; turn not away from the justness of his counsels, and follow his useful example.

56. Between friends, mutual confidence is never for a moment to be interrupted, whether in jest or earnest; for nothing can heal the wounds occasioned by deceit.

57. Beware of losing your friend on account of a trifling fault.

58. Prefer even reproaches to flattery; fly from the flatterer as from the worst of enemies.

59. In encountering those reverses which happen to men, learn to support their unpleasantness with patience and fortitude.

60. You will find that men are themselves the cause of their sufferings. *Wretches!* they are blind to the good that lies before them, and they are deaf to the truths that are addressed to them. How few perceive the true remedies for their evils.

“ Let not soft slumbers close your eyes,
Before you’ve recollected thrice
Your train of actions through the day:—
‘ Where have my feet traced out their way?
What have I learnt, where’er I’ve been;
From all I’ve heard, from all I’ve seen?
What know I more, that’s worth the knowing?
What have I done, that’s worth the doing?
What have I sought that I should shun?
What duty have I left undone?
Or into what new follies run?—
These self-inquiries aid the mind,
To shun the ill—toward virtue’s paths inclined.”

61. Pythagoras, according to Ovid, taught the doctrine of constant destruction and renovation of the surface of the globe; and he illustrated this doctrine by an appeal to the great physical changes obviously in operation—such as the conversion of land into sea, and sea

into land, the excavations of valleys by rivers and floods, the alluvial depositions, and the effects of earthquakes and volcanoes in convulsing and elevating the strata of the earth.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE RATIONALISTS AGAINST THE DOGMATISTS,
IN DEMONSTRATION OF THE NON-EXISTENCE OF DEITY.

(*Ascribed to Epicurus.*)

1. Fabulous persuasion, or faith, is the approbation of feigned ideas or notions ; it is the credulous belief in the reality of phantoms.

2. The dogmatists, finding themselves beaten out of the field of reason, fact, and even probability, by force of the positive demonstration opposed to them, that a Comprehender of the universe is morally impossible, because it is necessarily infinite and uncomprehended, begin upon some new ground, which they prove not, but would have it humbly granted without argument or understanding.

3. The dogmatists hold a God, as they call their notion, to be the efficient cause. Now let us inquire concerning this God ; and, only to confute and put down their presumption and arrogance, we say as follows :—

4. The things we understand, and of the existence of which there can be no rational doubt, must be understood as being somewhere in place. Now, forasmuch as among the dogmatists, some affirm that God is a body, and others say he is incorporeal ; some fable him as having a human form, and as creating man in his own image, and others deny this story ; some locate him, and others generalize him ; some will have it that he pervades the world, and others place him in a heaven beyond the world ; some teach that this God himself is a derived being, and others hold him to be eternal ; so that there is no agreement among them as to his personality and location. How can we have an idea of this said God, not having an indubitable knowledge of his substance, nor of his form, nor of the place where he is ? Let them first agree upon what they think God to be, and then they may endeavour to represent him to us, and may require that we should consider their statements, and, if of weight, yield to them ; but, while they disagree irreconcilably among themselves, we cannot receive any assertions from them as undoubtedly true.

5. “ But,” say they, “ conceive within yourself something incorruptible and blessed, and think God to be such.” This is silly ; for, not knowing the substance of the thing, neither can we know its accidents. Likewise, let them show us what is “ blessed or divine ;” whether it be that which is active virtue, or something that neither hath any business itself, nor affords business to any other ; for, differing widely in this point, they show that what they call blessed is

nothing determined, and consequently, that this "something blessed," or the pretended blessed Divinity, is nothing at all. Let them show that any one of the attributes, with which ignorance clothes its deified phantom, can for a moment resist the test of moral criticism or rational investigation.

6. As the said God cannot be demonstrated to exist by any manifest proof, so neither by any thing unmanifest; for he who attempts this course of argument will be driven into *infinite*, we constantly requiring a demonstration for their divine dogmas, and for the mysteries of their inscrutable God.

7. Moreover, he who maintains that there exists a God, holds that he either doth or doth not preside over the process of the world. His providence, then, must be either over all, or over some part only; if over all, then there would be no evil or wickedness in the world. But all things, as they confess, are full of evil; therefore, God cannot be said to be provident over all. If he presides over a part only, why is he provident over some part, and not over all? for either he both will and can be provident over all; or he would wish to be, but cannot; or he can, but will not; or he neither will nor can. If he both would and could, then would he be provident over all; but he is not, as is manifest from what has been already alleged; therefore, that he is both willing and able to be provident over all, is not true.

8. If he is willing, but has not the power, then his power is exceeded by that cause which hinders him from being provident over some things; but it is absurd to imagine a God to be weaker than some other thing. If he is able to superintend all, but will not, in that case he may be pronounced malevolent; if he neither will nor can, then, both malevolent and impotent.

9. Therefore, this fancied God is not provident over the things of the world; and if he is not provident over them, neither performeth any work, nor causeth any effect, none can say by what means he comprehends there is a God, seeing that it is neither manifest in itself, nor indicated by any effects.

10. In affirming that God is the provider of all things, they infer that he is the author of evil; and in saying that he is only provident over some part, then they will be forced to confess that he is either malevolent or impotent.

11. With regard to what they are pleased to call causation, i. e., the necessary connexion of cause and effect in nature, without which there could be no existence at all; and the fitness of organs for the exercise of their faculties, which they term *design*,—on this point, let them also first agree among themselves, for they are divided in opinion as to the doctrines of emanation and eternity; some holding this emanation to have been an act of necessity, and others, to its having been an act of free volition; some teaching the doctrine of an eternal chaos, and others the doctrine of creation from nothing, and the world's beginning at some limited period of duration. Let them show that there could ever have existed any thing without a cause, and

then we will listen to their notion of a first cause : the absurdity lies, not in conceiving of an infinite series of causes and effects, but in attempting to conceive in a first spring of infinite motion or existence.

12. Also : the universe that is necessarily infinite and eternal, cannot have original, or comprehended, or conceived, principles attached to it : it has not been instituted or commenced. In nature, we can only trace a process ; we can never discover a principle.

13. Time can be nothing more than the experience of a course of natural phenomena :

14. Were time finite, then it would have begun at some time, and would end at some time ; and consequently, there must have been once a time, when time was not, that is, before it began to be ; and there will be a time when time will be no more, that is, when it shall have ceased to be, which is absurd ; therefore, time is not determinate.

15. The reasoner, thus, prompted by his humanity and regard for truth, endeavours with argument to inform the mind, and to correct the insolent pretensions and assumption of the dogmatist.

CHAPTER XXII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS AND MAXIMS OF SADI, THE PERSIAN PHILOSOPHER AND POET.

[Though Sadi lived so late as in the eleventh century, the justness of his opinions, and his remoteness from Christendom, seem to entitle him to a place in this collection.]

1. Which is of the greater importance to man, pleasure, or the knowledge of truth ?

2. Individuals succeed each other ; generations commence and end ; but the races of no generation become extinct in the universe.

3. A man is born ; he commences the building of an edifice, and he dies ; another is born, and he commences his edifice in the same manner, and in like manner he dies.

4. Be just, and fear not.

5. Those labour in vain who acquire riches, and do not enjoy them ; so do those also who learn the principles of wisdom, but do not apply them in the conduct of their lives.

6. He who is impressed with good principles while he is young, will never be entirely destitute of a sense of virtue.

7. Though we resist temptation, yet we cannot ensure ourselves that we shall escape slander.

8. In a single hour it may be discovered whether a man has good sense, but it will require years to determine whether he has good temper, or good disposition.

9. The diamond is not of less value when buried in the soil, nor the dust less vile when borne by the wind toward the sky.

10. Perseverance accomplishes more than precipitation.

11. If learning were extinct from the earth, there would, notwithstanding, be no man who would think himself ignorant.

12. Wound the feelings of no person unnecessarily; there are thorns enough in the path of human life.

13. We should learn virtue from the vicious, by avoiding, in our own conduct, that which offends us in theirs.

14. Clemency to the wicked, is an injury to the good.

15. We should assist and relieve the wretched, for misfortunes may happen to ourselves.

16. Our misfortunes should teach us compassion: he best can feel for the condition of the wretched who has himself known wretchedness.

17. There is no harm in visiting others, but let it not be so often that they may say "It is enough:" go not every day, that so affection may increase.

18. Let him who neglects to raise the fallen, fear, lest when he himself shall have fallen, no one will stretch out his hand to assist him.

19. In adversity, do not visit your friend with a sad countenance, for you will embitter his cup; relate even your misfortunes with a smile, for wretchedness will never touch the heart of him who is disposed to be cheerful.

20. Listen not to professions of friendship from him who has been capable of forsaking his former friend in adversity.

21. More dangerous than the venom of a serpent is the tongue of your enemy, but who pretends to be your friend.

22. To believe that a feeble enemy cannot injure us, is to believe that a spark of fire cannot cause a conflagration.

23. A wise man will never contend with a fool.

24. Always encounter petulance with gentleness, and ill-humour with indulgence.

25. Vehemence creates dislike, and excessive mildness, contempt: be neither so severe as to be hated, nor so tame as to be insulted.

26. He who is liberal has no occasion for bodily strength or prowess; a sinewy arm is less strong than a hand filled with gold.

27. He who lives upon the fruits of his own labour escapes the contempt of haughty benefactors.

28. Sadi was taken prisoner by the Turks, and condemned to work at the fortifications of Tripoli; but he was redeemed from this deplorable state by a merchant of Aleppo, who had so much regard for him as to give him his daughter in marriage, with a dowry of one hundred sequins. This lady, however, being an intolerable scold, proved the plague of her husband's life, and seems to have given him that unfavourable opinion of the sex which appears occasionally in his works. During one of their altercations, she reproached him with the favours her family had conferred—"Are not you the man my father bought for ten pieces of gold?" "Yes," replied Sadi, "and he sold me again for a hundred sequins."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL THOUGHTS OF SENECA.

1. Moral instructions succeed best when they are impressed upon our minds in detached thoughts.

2. Every action during our whole lives should be regulated by considerations of honour or shame to ensue therefrom. On this rule, morals, or the distinction between what we ought to do, and what we ought not to do, are founded. Wisdom consists in distinguishing good from evil.

3. The natural lesson of mankind is, in all cases, to do as they would be done by.

4. Let us come back to that incontrovertible truth, that every thing happens in the necessary order of the natural process, as well in morals as in physics; and let our conduct and precepts furnish such examples that even prejudice the most blinded may not be able to remain unconvinced by our reasons and demonstrations.

5. Good sense keeps always in close alliance with nature.

6. In physics, an intelligent mind can distinguish one phenomenon to be the effect of another: it is the same in morals; the most trivial acts serve as indications whereby to judge of characters.

7. Infinite existence is connected and influenced by a chain of order which cannot be broken, and the direction of which it is impossible to change; even against our wills we are constrained to proceed on.

8. Since ignorance is the cause of our alarms, exemption from fear would well repay the pains taken to instruct ourselves.

9. It is the property of knowledge to render its possessor superior to those things which are a terror to other men.

10. Great phenomena, or extraordinary departures from the ordinary and common course of events, do not frequently happen.

11. The terrors occasioned by unusual phenomena are owing to our ignorance of their causes; and their unfrequency renders their effects upon our minds the more awful.

12. It is not to be wondered at, that we are as yet ignorant of the natural order, or process, or cause, of the movements of comets, the appearances of which are so rare, and which bodies approach us from such immeasurable distances, that we are unable to trace their orbits, or calculate the commencements and terminations of their revolutions; yet, they must be arranged with the eternal operations of nature; they move in their proper directions from which they cannot stray; they accomplish their courses, and are not extinguished, but merely withdrawn to so remote points that we can no longer see them. The time will, perhaps, come, when, by the continued observations of astronomers during future ages, facts, that are

unknown to us, will be plainly demonstrated to our posterity; and it will then only be astonishing that they should have escaped our penetration.

13. In ages to come, the seas may be traversed, and, in spite of the winds, and the storms, avarice and ambition may discover a new world; and Thule will then no longer be considered as the extreme part of the globe.

14. Of all that assemblage of substances which disappear from our sight to return into the bosom of nature, from whence they sprung and will continue to spring, nothing is annihilated; every thing changes, nothing perishes: these apparent destructions are but changes of forms.

15. As much fear is manifested of becoming nothing after death, as of going to hell.

16. Death falls heavy upon him who is too much known to others, and too little to himself.

17. We all of us complain of the shortness of time, and yet find that we have much more than we can tell what to do with; our lives are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing that is useful, or nothing that we ought to do: we are always complaining that our days are few, and we act as though there would be no end of them.

18. Man's projects and designs vary every day; now, he wishes that he were married, and now, his aspirations are to possess a friend; sometimes he is in a mood to exact submission from others, and sometimes no one can be more officious than himself; at one time he squanders his money like a fool, and at another, no Gripus could be more saving; his humour changes from the serious to the frivolous, and *vice versa*; the mask is changed at every instant.

19. Reflect that it is very difficult always to be the same person.

20. Our ancestors complained, we complain, and posterity will complain, that manners degenerate, that vice prevails, and that human society is rapidly tending to the very abyss of profligacy and wretchedness.

21. Our greatest evil has its source in the practice of modifying ourselves according to public opinion; we think that alone is estimable which is universally approved, or which is authorized by prevailing example, or modish custom; thus, instead of living exempt from all constraints, except those imposed upon us by the principles of reason, we are compelled to be the imitators of others, and the slaves of vulgar fashion.

22. Men are the sport and victims of errors transmitted by hand to hand from their predecessors; they are ruined by following the examples of others: mankind are not so happy as for the wise to form the majority; the multitude are always identified with error.

23. We discard nature for the sake of conforming to customs that are neither wholesome nor reasonable.

24. He whose purpose it is to adopt true opinions, and to act

justly, will not ask himself, "what will others say or think of me?" He is swayed by inclinations adverse to those of the multitude; an individual will be to him as the whole people, and the whole people as no more than an individual.

25. Base impostors! ye preach what cannot even be comprehended nor credited! It is for this ye contract your brows, and puff yourselves in black robes! These are the doctrines ye hold forth with such affected tones and dismal looks!

26. Nothing is decided beforehand, to will, or not to will; our judgments change and vary from day to day; and, for the main part of mankind, life is but a game of chance.

27. Our will has no determinate object; we know not what our will is till the moment we act.

28. In what does satisfaction consist? In a good conscience, approvable pursuits, uprightness of conduct, ties of affection, uniformity of character, and unconcern about the favours or frowns of fortune.

29. The highest attainment, the completest proof of excellence, is to be consistent in our actions and language; to manifest an entire conformity of character.

30. When we would fix the just estimate and real worth of a man, we should view him divested of his wealth and dignities, and of all the illusions incidental to fortune; it is his mind and character only that we should consider.

31. Some men are by nature so happily constituted, and circumstances have been so favourable to them, that, without much application, they are able to arrive at attainments which are ordinarily the fruits of arduous study alone; and they appear to have a perception of excellence immediately it is presented before them.

32. A happy life is the result of perfect correctness of conduct; a course of propriety, if adopted at any time, will render life supportable.

33. Virtue exists but in the mind that is cultivated, enlightened, and perfected by continual exercise.

34. The man whose conscience—always an infallible monitor—has ever been a check upon his actions, can alone indulge in retrospection with pleasure.

35. Gaiety is felt but in transient fits that smooth the forehead for a moment without affecting the heart; not he who laughs is happy, but he is so whose mind, full of cheerfulness and confidence, is superior to events.

36. A wise man is provided against conjunctures of every kind; when favourable, he avails himself of them to the utmost; and when unfortunate, he still manages to make the best of matters: in prosperity, he betrays no presumption; in adversity, he feels no despondency.

37. Those who have been constantly accustomed to good fortune, illy sustain reverses; but to be habituated to striving against misfortune, fortifies a man, and makes him invulnerable.

38. Continual misfortunes are attended at least with one advantage ; constant suffering has the effect of rendering us insensible to pain.

39. He who has not permitted himself to be the dupe of prosperity, can never be overwhelmed by adversity.

40. That virtue pleases us which has been exercised, has been made considerate, and which is confirmed by contests, and by bearing up against misfortunes.

41. We are made sensible by misfortune : it might be said that good sense and good fortune are incompatible ; prosperity deprives man of his judgment.

42. There are people who have lost their property, and yet have retained their good temper.

43. Reason supplies some consolation even under the most trying circumstances.

44. Courage may be displayed even on the bed of death.

45. Grief itself has its limits and restraints, which a considerate man will observe ; in sorrow, as in everything else, we ought not to trespass beyond the bounds of propriety ; the ignorant alone are subject to transports, both in their lamentations and their rejoicings.

46. Nothing is more capricious than the judgment of the people ; if they see a man firm in the midst of distress, they brand him as impious and hardened ; if they see another overwhelmed by his grief, and prostrated on the corpse of his friend, him they denounce as weak and effeminate.

47. It is impossible for him who regards virtue to please the people ; it is always by mean resorts that the popular favour is obtained.

48. The recompense of good actions consists in having performed them.

49. Nothing is so well calculated to render a man good, to fix his waverings, and correct his vicious propensities, as associating with excellent people.

50. The chief indication of our minds being at ease, is to be satisfied with our own company.

51. So far is it from being possible that the multitude should all be of the same sentiment, scarcely one of them has any sentiment at all.

52. The vices of the multitude should be viewed as ridiculous rather than heinous ; there is more humanity in smiling at the faults of mankind than in condemning them.

53. Let us be at peace with ourselves, without being troubled about our reputation ; let us consent that it should be bad, provided that we merit that it should be good.

54. Virtue cannot have a more ardent votary than he who, in order not to sully his conscience, renounces even the reputation of honesty.

55. The province of wisdom is extensive ; to comprehend it, we have need to divest our minds of all superfluous incumbrances.

56. Vice entices by its lure of gratification ; but virtue calls for willing and disinterested service.

57. The chief good, the most assured advantage, is to be independent—to need nothing, and to forsake the haunts where fortune presides.

58. He to whom riches are necessary fears for their safety, and his fear is the bane of enjoyment; it is long since I have troubled myself about profit and loss.

59. A corrupt mind finds itself as uncomfortable in riches as in poverty; it is every where attended by its scourge.

60. Let a man be ever so rich, he is more unhappy on account of what he has not, than happy on account of what he has.

61. Without economy, there are no riches sufficiently great; with it, none are too small,

62. The art of acquiring, and that of preserving, are two means, which, taken separately, may either of them render a man opulent.

63. It is not the possessing of little, but the desire for much, that makes us poor.

64. There is little difference between not possessing a thing and not desiring it.

65. Avarice is never satisfied: nature requires but little; the body is as easily clothed as nourished; all farther desires are the cravings of our vices, and not the suggestions of our exigencies.

66. The method of supplying instruction by precept is tedious; example is the readier and more certain course to be adopted.

67. The end of study should be, not to know more, but to know things better, than others.

68. One kind of intemperance is, the wish to extend our knowledge farther than our occasions require.

69. A vain display of their researches renders the learned insupportable.

70. He who engages himself in minute researches only involves himself in perplexities.

71. Where no merit is attached to a performance but its difficulty, once seeing it is sufficient.

72. How much time has been lost in cavilling about words, and in captious disputations that have served but to exercise a vain sharp-wittedness; the practice of which might degrade the finest genius.

73. It is not fickle to renounce errors which we are convinced are such, and which we despise. To affect persisting in such a case can proceed from nothing but perverse pride.

74. Can he be happy whose entire regards are engrossed by himself—whose whole thoughts are occupied in his own selfish interests? We truly live for ourselves only when we live for others.

75. The finest discovery would cease to be gratifying, were it known to myself alone; I would not desire even the possession of wisdom itself on the condition of its being kept locked up in my own bosom.

76. Elegance of diction is not discarded by philosophy; but much labour should not be spent for the sake of shining in our expressions;

the main object is, to speak what we think, and to think of what we say: the philosopher should not seek to amuse, but to instruct.

77. Truth ought to be explained in language that is plain and unambiguous.

78. Philosophy does not require of us restrictions that would be unpleasant, but only to be moderate; and moderation is consistent with propriety.

79. Affected elegance is not an ornament worthy of a man.

80. The speaker who affects a laboured precision in his style, is sure to be disagreeable and wearisome.

81. Discourses which please in the excitement of hearing them first delivered, lose somewhat of their effect in a calm perusal of them when published.

82. The instructions of art are variable and uncertain; what nature teaches is always uniform and constant.

83. Nothing is easier than to form the mind while young; nothing is more difficult than to eradicate vices that have grown up with us.

84. A careful education is of great importance, for our minds are easily formed in youth; but it is difficult to cure ill habits.

85. Vices are never fully eradicated; it is easier to prevent their being planted than to restrain their growth after they have once taken root.

86. The diet of children should be simple, their clothing plain, and in no respect differing from that of their fellows; there will be no occasion for taking offence by invidious comparisons when distinctions are not permitted.

87. How ardent would be the desire of young people for knowledge and virtue if they only found some to instigate them, and fire them with the impulse. Blame is attached to teachers who inculcate contest rather than conduct; and on the part of the pupils who are inclined to cultivate their spirit rather than their understanding.

88. Habit becomes nature; and after a while we conform with pleasure to that we at first did with repugnance.

89. Timidity, that happy presage in a young man, like the blush on the cheek, which is its effect, springs not from weakness, but from the novelty of objects and feelings, and want of experience.

90. Man, at his birth, is endued with the germs of every good sentiment.

91. Care should be taken not to encourage an impetuous temper in children, nor to weaken the force of a happily constituted and sprightly disposition. The virtues that ought to be cultivated, and the vices that should be repressed, are often nourished by the same mode of treatment.

92. Children should never be awed by a name, nor be bred up in superstitious fear by any kind of imposition on their imaginations.

93. Those mental disorders which are apparent are of minor consequence; those are the more dangerous which are disguised under a specious character.

94. Insensibly we contract the faults of those with whom we associate.

95. Much fatigue exhausts the animal spirits. Whatever be our choice of amusements, we should not be slow to return from those of the body to those of the mind: the latter should be exercised constantly; its nourishment is supplied at a cheap rate; neither cold nor heat, nor age itself, can interrupt this exercise: let us give all our care then to the securing of a possession which meliorates our condition even in old age.

96. Retirement and leisure, without letters, are death.

97. If we cannot support abstinence, we can at least, practise moderation, which approaches very near to it, but, perhaps, is more difficult; there are dispositions which it would be easier to crush than to regulate.

98. It is not natural to be careless of our persons, and to affect negligence, rather than adhere to habits of simple decency: doubtless we err exceedingly in requiring delicacies and luxuries alone; but it is folly to despise the enjoyments that may be obtained at an easy rate.

99. An useless article is too dear, even if it cost but a trifle.

100. He who is wise, will be as far from violating the general manners, as from attracting notice by the singularity of his appearance.

101. Abridgements are desirable for beginners, because they instruct: a synopsis is convenient for the learned, because it sustains their recollection.

102. Praise is not readily conceded to a man of genius, unless he needs, at the same time, our indulgence for some great fault.

103. Our judgment is more unbiassed when it is exercised in considering the merits of another, and not our own.

104. If a man affirms himself to be irreproachable, it is in reference to the absence of other witnesses, and not to the testimony of his own conscience.

105. Few would commit wrong, if witnesses were not absent on the occasion.

106. There are situations that are unwholesome to the most robust constitutions, and professions that are dangerous for honest, but frail men.

107. Nothing is more common than a disposition to advance beyond the limits prescribed by others; nothing more rare than an adherence to restrictions of our own imposing.

108. The same acts may be either shameful or praiseworthy: they are characterized by the intention and manner of doing them.

109. Expressions and actions are generally characterized by the mode in which they are said and done: thus, the same services differ according to the manner of rendering them.

110. It is under the mask of truth that calumny always attacks innocence.

111. There is no great difference between the civility of some friends, and the spite of enemies; the imprudent complaisance of the former precipitates us into all the mistakes desired by the latter.

112. A crowd of friends press around the rich. a vast solitude spreads wide around those who are impoverished.

113. Above all things, keep me from those friends who are always croaking and looking at every thing in an unfavourable light; however perfect and sure their friendship might be, their company would yield me neither satisfaction nor repose.

114. A recreant friend may sometimes be reclaimed by indulgence, when upbraidings would only have a wrong effect upon him: render him not hardened; let him retain the little sensibility that remains, and which, by a reproach too severely expressed, might be totally extinguished.

115. To form intimate connexions with one whom we do not know, only to break them upon acquaintance, is scarcely consistent with good sense.

116. We prize the esteem of him whom indifference mortifies.

117. A sick man is consoled and sustained by the attachment of his friends, more than by aught besides.

118. Those, of whose measures you frankly avow your disapprobation, are, at the time provoked; but, in the end, they admire your firmness.

119. Justice does not, as is commonly supposed, entirely redound to the advantage of others; most of its advantages revert to self; and this is even the case with respect to beneficence: by obliging others, we gratify ourselves.

120. We must not too nicely discriminate in performing acts of benevolence; the effects cannot be calculated; what is done, is at a venture.

121. We deceive ourselves if we think the art of giving easy; there is more difficulty than might be supposed, if we would consult our reason, and not scatter our liberalities blindly and at hazard.

122. Charitable deeds are oftener owing to caprice, or to the pleasure yielded to the will of the donor, than to considerations of the relief or gratification afforded to the objects of them.

123. That man should not be deemed liberal, who acts as if he were in a pet with his money: negligence affects good nature, and rashness imitates courage.

124. To find one grateful person, overpays us for the disappointment which we have met with in doing many acts of beneficence to the ungrateful.

125. We give too late after the request has been made to us. Want should be anticipated, and a worthy man should be excused from the heavy task of soliciting: nothing is so dear as that which has been obtained by entreaties.

126. To oblige late, is, for a long time previously, to have refused.

127. How can any one be grateful for a favour that has been

extorted rather than granted : do not ever expect the thanks of that man to be sincere, who has been wearied by delay and teased by expectation.

128. Lending but a trifling sum to another makes him your debtor ; the loan of a greater amount would make him your enemy.

129. There is no hatred more dangerous than that which is produced by shame on account of having received an obligation which can never be repaid.

130. He who has placed himself under unrequited obligation, would wish, if possible, that the bestower of it existed not.

131. The gratitude we express for favours received, is so much humiliation on our part.

132. It is not terror, but affection and mutual assistance which should bind the associated community.

133. He has but little rest who is tormented by the thirst of attaining to a higher condition : contemplate the multitude below you, rather than count the small number who are more exalted than yourself.

134. Pride begets vanity, and vanity begets presumption.

135. One of the defects of ambition is, that it is incapable of retrospection.

136. The most irksome condition of grandeur is the difficulty of descending to a lower grade.

137. There is far more danger in being feared than in being despised : all who intimidate others ought themselves to tremble.

138. There is no condition so abject but the hope is nourished of avenging the wrong done to us, even on the most elevated in station : one is always sufficiently powerful to inflict harm on the object of one's resentment.

139. Recollect that we cannot make ourselves feared without being subject to fear ourselves ; nor can we be formidable with security.

140. There is no one but has it in his power to be injurious.

141. The most heinous vice of those who have been rendered insolent by good fortune is, to add hatred towards the objects against whom they have committed injustice.

142. The most adroit injury that can be committed is, to make the injured person be thankful for the evil done to him.

143. The rich are hated at the same time that court is paid to them ; their conduct is thought odious by those very people who would imitate them if they were in similar circumstances.

144. None are more disposed to exercise oppressions over others than those who have learnt to commit outrages, by such having been submitted to by themselves.

145. Those who have often placed themselves in a situation to solicit for pardon, are the worst in the world to grant it when demanded of themselves.

146. He who plays the tyrant at home is as gentle as a lamb abroad.

147. Orders delivered mildly are more readily obeyed ; the human mind prefers being led rather than to be dragged along by force.

148. When men become indifferent about their own lives they will be ready for any desperate act.

149. Servitude constrains but few ; great numbers constrain themselves to servitude.

150. In order to excuse slaves from their humiliation, and their owners from odium, the latter were called by the Romans " fathers of families," and the former, " familiars," or domestics.

151. No one man is nobler born than another, unless he is born with a better capacity and a more amiable disposition : those who make such a parade with their family pictures, and their pedigrees, may, properly speaking, be called notorious rather than noble persons. I think it right to say thus much, in order to repel the insolence of some folk who owe their distinction entirely to accidental circumstances, and not at all to their own merits.

152. Every man's ancestry is equally remote ; the line of descent extends beyond any finite period : fortune and time blend all ranks, and intermix every race.

153. Greatness is never absolute ; it but increases or diminishes by comparison.

154. There is not a surer indication of strength of mind than not to be excited to anger by any accident.

155. Levity of character is the bane of all that is good and virtuous :

156. Passion is as ill fitted for commanding as for executing.

157. He whom anger furnishes with courage, would not, without its aid, be courageous : thus anger does not assist or augment courage, but supplies its place.

158. Those passions of which we ourselves are the subjects are always regarded by us as just.

159. Let us avoid such provocations as we find it difficult to bear, and especially sour and querulous companions ; for cross and splenetic humours are contagious.

160. Women carry all their passions to an extreme.

161. There is more of warmth than vehemence in the anger of children and women ; old men fret and vex rather than get in a passion.

162. By excessive haste we embarrass our own progress ; or, hurry and dispatch are very different things.

163. When we manifest too great a fear of being imposed upon, others are often the more inclined to take advantage of us : our mistrust seems to authorise and excite them to attempts at deception.

164. A fault common in human nature is, the too easily giving credit to that we learn with regret.

165. Can any man be more unfortunate than he who loses remembrance of every benefit, and keeps in mind nothing but his wrongs.

166. Regrets for what we have lost, and fears of future loss, equally torture the mind.

167. Light mishaps loosen, but grievous sorrows enchain the tongue.

168. Nothing is more usual than for people to regard everything which they cannot perform themselves as impossible.

169. We regard ourselves as privileged when we think the course we have adopted more safe than that of others, and the misfortunes of others never serve as cautions to ourselves.

170. More people are restrained from doing wrong by the fear of shame than by the love of virtue.

171. Crime is itself its own corrector; at the moment it is committed commences its punishment: the criminal thinks himself discovered, although his crime may as yet be concealed.

172. Impunity may attend crime, but security never. How lamentable would it be for mankind if the wicked did not stand in dread of natural and terrible retributions.

173. A person suffers in expecting punishment, and it is expected when deserved.

174. It is the chief penalty of the guilty that they are never absolved before the tribunal of their conscience.

175. A good conscience needs not concealment; a bad one would be pursued by terrors, even in a desert.

176. There are crimes of such a nature that their shame redounds on him who brings them to prosecution.

177. There are a thousand things which, without being established by law, are nevertheless enforced by custom; which is of more force than any law.

178. The conduct of him who is satisfied with not transgressing beyond the bounds of the law, is but of little worth; our duties extend much farther than the mere observance of the laws.

179. To be treated with contempt forms the safeguard of some people: we spurn him whom we despise, but our resentment goes no farther; we are not provoked to be vindictive: we do not give ourselves the trouble to take measures for his chastisement.

180. What is rashly uttered obtains a more prompt circulation, and is repeated the more industriously.

181. He who respects himself will also respect others.

182. There is no other animal retains its regrets for its young so long as man; and this is owing to his nourishing his grief, and afflicting himself, not in proportion to what he does feel, but in proportion to what he wishes to feel.

183. Personal comeliness is a letter of recommendation.

184. It is an alarming symptom of national decline when luxury has so far got the better of nature, as for individuals to sacrifice their health to fashion.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SELECTIONS FROM THE CONVERSATIONS OF SOCRATES.

1. Death is an event that ought not to be viewed as a calamity; the lot of those is not to be lamented who have not suffered the evils of old age, decay of sight or hearing, and perhaps failure of understanding or mind.

2. Death rendering its subject insensible, and being an absolute extinction of mind, it cannot be attended by evil or suffering.

3. Superstition is obedient to pride, as its parent.

4. Philosophy is the way to true happiness.

5. Having searched into all kinds of science, we discover the folly of neglecting those things which concern human life, and involving ourselves in difficulties about questions that are but mere notions; we should confine ourselves to nature and reason. Fancies beyond the reach of the understanding, and which have yet been made the objects of belief—these have been the source of all the disputes, errors, and superstitions that have prevailed in the world: such notional mysteries cannot be made subservient to the right uses of humanity.

6. Wisdom consists in not thinking we understand those things, or rather fancies, of which we can form no natural conception.

7. The way of gaining admission into the temple of science is through the portal of doubt.

8. True felicity does not consist in possessing the frail favours of fortune, but in the knowledge and practice of wisdom. The cultivation of virtuous manners is necessarily attended with pleasure as well as profit; the honest man alone is happy, and it is absurd to attempt to separate things which are in their nature so closely united as virtue and interest.

9. We mistake in seeking happiness from sensual indulgence, which is too worthless and fleeting to procure permanent felicity.

10. Is it not shameful that, through indolence and indifference, we should arrive at old age without having ascertained how far we might have extended our powers in making attainments of knowledge?

11. 'Tis pleasant to grow old with a good friend and sound sense.

12. Happiness consists not in luxury and pride; to want nothing, or the least next to nothing, is the wealth of independence.

13. Imprint this maxim deeply on your mind—"There is nothing certain in this human and mortal state;" by which means you will shun being transported with prosperity, or dejected in adversity.

14. There is a certain link in the affairs of the world, which connects one event with another; and he who is skilful enough to lay hold on this chain, has it almost in his power to penetrate into futurity; he takes an extensive view of all things that happen within the sphere of his observation.

15. The just man may be esteemed a happy man.

16. The just man is defined to be, he who observes the laws by which he ought to be governed in his intercourse with his fellow-men.

17. Our duty is, to be most rational and useful, because that which wants reason also wants respect; we have no concern with any thing that is beyond comprehension.

18. He who is attached to justice is estimable; and he who separates the just from the useful is detestable.

19. Have you not heard of a quality of character called low-mindedness? This reproachful term is used to signify an ignorance of what is admirable, just, and becoming.

20. Every thing that can be applied to any particular use is becoming and admirable, relatively to the purpose for which it is suited; things are fine and good according to their conveniences; and, if inconvenient, then they are unpleasant and bad.

21. The handsomest and most agreeable residence is that which furnishes the pleasantest retreat in all seasons, and in which we can store, with the greatest security, that which we possess.

22. All things are good and fair in respect of those things where-with they agree, but ill and deformed in respect of those things with which they do not agree.

23. All just and virtuous actions clothe perfect goodness with the charms of beauty.

24. Virtue or wisdom is the beauty of the mind, and vice is its deformity.

25. A fine expression on the countenance is a mark or indication of beauty of mind.

26. Simplicity adorns, preposterousness deforms, and slovenliness degrades.

27. The insane should be bound; the ignorant should be instructed.

28. The virtue of a young man is, too much of nothing.

29. In childhood we should be modest; in youth, temperate; in manhood, just; and in old age, wise.

30. While we lead useless lives, it is folly to imagine that we are happy, because we have the means of living idly and in fine style; it is stupid to think that riches, combined with shameful ignorance, can pass current for merit.

31. Knowledge alone is the greatest good, and ignorance the greatest evil.

32. Leisure is one of the most valuable privileges.

33. Independence is the noblest of all possessions.

34. All advantages, which experience shows us to be attainable by instruction and practice, we should exert ourselves to acquire.

35. Education, combined with natural talents, is capable of rendering a man every thing that he ought to be toward himself, his friends, and the public.

36. He must be a fool who thinks that wisdom is to be obtained without instruction.

37. The first step to be taken in order to acquire wisdom is to

labour in the attainment of self-knowledge ; for, knowing ourselves, we shall desire only what is really for our good ; whereas, without this knowledge, we often shall crave for that which is hurtful to us.

38. He who is acquainted with himself knows what is most suitable to his capacity, to what his powers are adequate, and to what they are unequal ; in attempting only that which he is capable of performing, he supplies his wants, and lives in comfort ; by abstaining from undertakings which he knows not how to conduct, he avoids embarrassments, and does not undergo the mortification of having committed mistakes.

39. He who knows not himself, and is deceived respecting his own abilities, knows no better how to form a correct opinion of other men than he does to estimate himself.

40. He who knows not his own mind is incapable of acting with decision ; he sees all his projects come to nought ; he is punished by the misfortunes he brings on himself ; he is despised, becomes a jesting-stock, and lingers out his days in disgrace and contempt.

41. Not to know ourselves, and to fancy we know that of which we are ignorant, approaches insanity.

42. Those are not commonly regarded as fools who mistake on subjects not generally known, but those who err in matters with which every one is conversant ; we are not laughed at for small mistakes ; the term folly is only applied to an extreme degree of illusion.

43. To be fit for assuming the management of our own affairs, it is necessary to be acquainted with the knowledge they require ; for, if we are deficient in this, we have to submit to those we find more competent than ourselves ; even women take the precedence of men in the management of those concerns which pertain to their sex.

44. Whatever we undertake, we should employ therein our utmost study and endeavours to perform it well.

45. In every thing, men naturally differ one from another ; in every thing, they become expert by practice.

46. By practice, we may acquire whatever personal habits we choose ; exercise is no less necessary for the acquirements of the mind.

47. Those whose frames are constitutionally feeble, become, nevertheless, much greater adepts in the exercises to which they are accustomed, than those who have not been practised in exertions of the same kind.

48. Every good quality can be acquired by habit, and temperance as well as the rest.

49. Neglect causes us even to forget those principles with which we had once been best acquainted.

50. Those who are most favoured, as well as those who are under least obligations to nature, must possess application, if they would excel in any branch whatsoever.

51. All that is admirable and of worth, is gained but at the price of assiduous application.

52. He only who is temperate can discern advantages in every thing; he alone knows how to discriminate by the aid of reason and experience, so as to make always the best choice, and constantly avoid evil.

53. Temperance alone enables us to endure privations; and it alone can make us acquainted with real pleasure.

54. Temperance most conduces to man's elevation of mind, renders him most happy, and best fits him for discourse.

55. A man ought to inure himself to voluntary labour and endurance, so as that he may appear to undergo that which shall be imposed on him by necessity, not compulsorily, but freely: soft ways of living in indolent pleasure, beget no good constitution of body, nor knowledge in the mind.

56. Useful occupation is good and beneficial; to be idle, is hurtful and wrong: those who do good are employed; those who spend their time in vain recreations, are idle.

57. He only is idle, who might be better employed.

58. Intemperance, which disqualifies us for patiently enduring hunger, thirst, watchings, privations, and self-denial, prevents us, by that very reason, from enjoying the actual pleasure that is felt in satisfying the wants imposed upon us by necessity.

59. Intemperance deprives men of prudence, that greatest of virtues, and precipitates them into the midst of disorders.

60. Nothing is more opposite than the conduct of prudence and that of dissipation.

61. Prudence is the accomplishment, the refinement of the mind; and those are prudent who are acquainted with this refinement.

62. Health of body ought carefully to be preserved, as that whereon all the attainments of knowledge depends.

63. Wisdom is the mind's health; and this depends on the health of the body.

64. Defect of memory, dullness of apprehension, lazy inclinations, and insanity itself, are the effects of an injudicious disposition of our faculties; and it often occasions our losing that intelligence which we had acquired.

65. We ought rather to seek pleasures in ourselves than in others.

66. We should take especial care to control and suppress whatever can be the least blemish on a generous mind, as sordid thirst of gain, anger, dissipation, or unmanly grief.

67. Sordid and impure indulgences are most to be refrained from.

68. He who has indulged in a luxurious habit of living, is with difficulty cured in sickness: the fool is in as bad a predicament when adversity befalls him.

69. With a good appetite, we need few condiments; the thirsty are not choice about their wine.

70. He who has been accustomed to satisfy his hunger from a single dish, will not regret the absence of a sumptuously spread

table; and he finds himself restricted to his ordinary fare without concern.

71. One requisite of good cheer is, that it be wholesome both for body and mind, and that it be prepared without too much trouble; real good living is, the partaking of nourishment with moderation.

72. When we divest ourselves of wants, we approach the highest attainment of happiness.

73. People of small fortunes, if they know how to economize, will be reckoned amongst the rich.

74. Some people, who have but little means, yet save something; others, with vast incomes, scarcely have bare necessities.

75. Be contented with what you possess, without omitting, at the same time, to make the best improvement of it you can.

76. I willingly rank myself with that class who have relinquished all ambition, except that of leading a peaceful and agreeable life; there is a medium condition to which I desire to conform, neither commanding nor being commanded, but always preserving my liberty.

77. Those who engage themselves for hire have services to perform; he who receives no salary is not obliged to accommodate himself to a disagreeable employer.

78. Where aristocracy prevails, those called the lower classes only breathe for the service and profit of those who arrogantly distinguish themselves as the higher classes, or the great.

79. It is not enough to be elected to fill the situation of chief magistrate by the suffrages of the people; some knowledge of the mode of conducting the affairs of the state is also necessary.

80. He who is bent upon increasing his possessions will meddle with nothing but what he sees is attended by a prospect of gain.

81. Content is the riches of nature; he is richest who is contented with the least.

82. Riches are to be measured by their use.

83. To be moderate in prosperity is to know how to walk on the ice.

84. He is avaricious who amasses wealth by scandalous means, and forsakes his indigent friends.

85. To be prosperous without exertions, this I deem being fortunate; to owe our success to diligence and attention, this I call good conduct.

86. Success is the effect of well-judged endeavours; good fortune is the result of accident.

87. He who has been faulty in the management of his own concerns will not be able to advise well with reference to those of others. Those who are especially careless of their own welfare are seldom remarkably attentive to that of others.

88. Take time to deliberate and advise; but lose no time in carrying your resolutions into effect.

89. Fortitude aimeth at high attempts.

90. We are oftener deterred from enterprize by our apprehensions than by actual difficulties.

91. Those who are endowed with aspiring and energetic minds, and who are most ardent in their pursuits, will distinguish themselves by their virtues and their excellence of conduct, provided they have been well instructed in the knowledge of their duties; but, if they have been neglected, and they remain in ignorance, they will become the most vicious and obnoxious of men.

92. Men of the greatest knowledge and ability, if they are not virtuous, are only the more disposed and able to do mischief than others.

93. An honourable death is preferable to an ignominious life.

94. Those who too easily get the better of others by their superior strength, are apt to abandon themselves to a foolish confidence.

95. Confidence begets indifference, indolence, and want of discipline; fear keeps men more vigilant, more tractable, and more attentive to good order.

96. What is valour, and how is it distinguished from a brutal and uncalculating fierceness? Such as have the highest reputation for courage in practice, are often very deficient in principle. Valour must have good moral sense for its basis; it consists in the knowledge of what is, and what is not, to be feared; consequently, we must first discriminate between real good and evil, and it is closely connected with the other virtues, nor can it ever subsist without them: philosophy is the true school of bravery.

97. Some minds are naturally more firm than others, and more capable of encountering difficulties; but courage may be acquired by moral culture and by exercise.

98. Those only who are able to act coolly, and who know how to decide correctly in dangerous and trying occasions, are men of courage; in such circumstances cowards are at a loss how to proceed.

99. Which think you is the pleasanter character, the man who is distinguished by a mild, happy, and amiable disposition, or he who discovers propensities that are wicked, shameful, and abhorrent?

100. Good men must let the world be convinced that their honour is more firm than an oath.

101. Those only live without perturbation of mind who are conscious to themselves of no ill.

102. He who has practised virtue in such a manner as to have committed no crime has the testimony of a good conscience, and, consequently, enjoys perfect tranquillity.

103. Fugitives are in dread, though unpursued; fools are troubled though not in adversity.

104. The easiest way to gain respect is to be really what we wish to appear.

105. You will gain a confirmed reputation if you are known to avoid doing, yourself, actions which you would censure if done by others.

106. Guard against one fault which is practised by most men;

they scrutinize with a keen eye the conduct of others, and never think of examining themselves.

107. We should endeavour to shun censoriousness, and practise candour.

108. It is not easy to act in any way without exposure to ill-natured remarks ; whatever we engage in, it is scarcely possible to avoid every fault ; and even if none were committed, are there not silly and malignant calumniators who are always ready to condemn ? I advise you to avoid those who are ever disposed to blame others, and to apply all your endeavours and all your skill to perform well your undertakings ; for this is the way to encounter few reproaches, to place yourself in circumstances above want, to live in a certain ease, devoid of apprehensions about the future, and to provide yourself resources in old age.

109. Be careful to avoid all occasions that might lay you open to aspersions on your reputation, though you might know the reports raised against you to be lies ; for, as many will be ignorant of the truth, as to facts, so they will be liable to be imposed upon by the rumours in circulation.

110. Listen not to a whisperer and slanderer, for he tells you not anything out of good will : but as he exposes to you the secrets of others, so will he expose your secrets to them.

111. To act injuriously towards the good, to incur their disapprobation, to enter into the schemes of the wicked, to connect yourself with them in preference to men of excellence—this is what I call the height of infamy.

112. To obtain the friendship of the good, it is requisite that we show ourselves worthy, and act uprightly ; it is impossible for an unworthy person to secure their regards ; the wicked cannot even indulge affections amongst each other.

113. There can be no friendship except among the virtuous ; men devoted to the indulgence of their appetites and passions, cannot know true attachments.

114. A good and faithful friend is the best of all possessions.

115. How excellent is it to serve our friends, and, at the same time, to make friends of our enemies.

116. We should not covet the friendship of persons of aristocratic consequence, nor of those who are raised to dignities ; but of those men who are just, considerate, and kind, in whatsoever state they may be.

117. Do not reckon those only as your friends who are grieved at your misfortunes, but likewise those who do not envy your prosperity ; for there are many who will express their concern when their friends are afflicted, but who will also look with an invidious eye on the liberalities of an indulgent fortune.

118. The conduct of some men is singular in friendship ; they are incapable of abandoning their friends in misfortune ; they condole with them in their afflictions ; and yet, are inconsolable when they

see them happy: there are many who, though they will not refuse to succour their friends in distress, yet cannot bear to witness their good fortune.

119. Envy is a grief, not on account of the adversity of friends, nor the prosperity of enemies, but at the prosperity of friends; for many are so foolishly inclined as to malign those in good fortune, whom in misfortune they would pity.

120. There are many who decorate the tombs of those whom, when living, they persecuted with envy.

121. Wherever constancy has been displayed in former friendships, new friends may expect no less satisfaction.

122. There is only one way to gain the attachment of little minds, and that is, by making them presents; but generous minds are influenced by friendship.

123. He who accepts money from another, owns him for his master in the meanest degree of servitude.

124. Whoever has it in his power to return a kindness, either to a friend or an enemy, is guilty of injustice if he meanly neglects to do it.

125. Favours are doubled in value when they arrive opportunely.

126. A remarkable instance, is that of a brother acting as he ought.

127. Whether it is better to marry or live single?—Whichever you do, you will repent.

("Marriage has many pains, and celibacy no pleasures."—*Dr. Johnson.*)

128. Men ought to conform to the customs of their country, and women to the wishes of their husbands.

129. As to your manners, be affable and easy of access, and let your language be courteous and civil; the one requires you should notice those whom you meet, and the other that you should speak obligingly to them; but be sure to behave handsomely to all in general, though you only converse familiarly with the wise; by which conduct you will offend nobody, and be certain of gaining the esteem and friendship of men of merit.

130. Never put on a serious and grave countenance when the jest is going round, nor affect levity and mirth when gravity is required; for, whatever is ill-timed and unseasonable, is disagreeable: avoid wrangling, because it is unpleasant; and shun censoriousness, because it is injurious.

131. Do not affect a demure nor severe look, but always preserve a sedateness of carriage; for the first will make you appear self-consequential, the latter will always insure you respect.

132. Let not your visits be too frequent to the same persons, nor your discourse dwell too long on the same subject; for there is a satiety in all things.

133. It is arrogance to be speaking all the time yourself, and be unwilling to hear what others have to say.

134. There is a great difference between speaking in private and addressing a public audience.

135. Observing the numerous articles of luxury which were exposed for sale in Athens, he exclaimed, "How many things are here which I do not need."

136. Critias and Charicles sent for Socrates, and strictly forbade him to teach or discourse with any of the young men. "You must," commanded Critias, "refrain from communicating with the working men, whose ears you have sufficiently grated with your impertinent discourse." "I must, then," said Socrates, "abstain from justice, benevolence, and the like?" "Even from the very neat herds," replied Charicles; "which, unless you do, take heed that your herd come not short home."

137. The philosopher was summoned before the Tribunal of Five Hundred, on a charge of corrupting the Athenian youth, and ridiculing the gods. He was condemned by his judges, who, while they expected submission, and that meanness of behaviour and servility which distinguished criminals, were astonished and irritated by the defence he made, which was full of simplicity and noble grandeur—the energetic language of outraged innocence. When he was required, according to the spirit of the Athenian laws, to pass sentence on himself, and to name the mode of dying he preferred, he said, "For my attempts to teach the Athenian youth justice and moderation, and render the rest of my countrymen more happy, let me be maintained at the public expense during the remaining years of my life." This exasperated the tyrants in the highest degree, and he was sentenced to be poisoned.

138. Through the whole course of his life, Socrates gave himself up to the direction of the divine power of reason; and this is all to be understood by the genius, or *dæmon*, which is said to have, from time to time, given him instruction. He called "reason, the only divinity."

CHAPTER XXV

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS OF TACITUS.

1. Happy and glorious are the times when men can exercise their right to speak and publish the truth.

2. Amongst the Greeks, at one period, not only liberty of publishing was allowed, but even license was tolerated; if any man found himself aggrieved by a satire, he had similar means of retaliating.

3. Those who are in power mistake egregiously when they think that their acts of authority can obliterate the record of their misdeeds; on the contrary, by persecuting an author, weight is added to his work; this kind of proscription, which redounds always to the glory of a writer, is a reproach to the rulers of a foreign nation, and to

those amongst our own citizens who have meditated to adopt their tyranny.

4. The principal object to be kept in view by an author should be not to pass over virtue without attributing to it its due praise, and to let vice see that its every action and every word descend to posterity with execration.

5. Tiberius exclaimed, in allusion to his senators, "Ah! the wretches! they are eager to court their own servitude! they cry royalty, God bless it!" Thus, even the enemy of public liberty was himself disgusted with the excessive subserviency of his base slaves.

6. In the decline of the Roman Republic, the consular, patrician, and equestrian orders, rushed headlong into servitude; the more illustrious the family, the more corrupt and eager was the individual.

7. Amongst the engines which have been made instrumental for enslaving nations, it has been politic, at all times, to have recourse to kings.

8. Under an aristocracy of nobles and priests, linked together with royalty, a nation is worse abused than by any other tyranny.

9. Under a monarchy, we must suffer our property to be taxed in order to enrich its satraps, who live in splendour, and who enlist our youth to serve in enforcing the will of our oppressors: taxation is but a regulated confiscation.

10. When a prince dies, the circumstance of his death is always strained into a catastrophe.

11. In a corrupt court, inordinate flattery is as dangerous as not to flatter at all.

12. Falsity and exaggeration always characterize flattery; adulation strives to surpass all preceding attempts at praise.

13. Private merit is always cast in the shade by the pompous display made by sovereign power.

14. Nothing so much alarms the suspicion of a tyrant, as the reputation of a citizen which causes his name to be sounded louder than his own.

15. Nothing can be more frail and fleeting than the fame that is accorded to one who merely holds his distinction under the appointment of a supreme power.

16. There are but few instances of persons enjoying the favour of princes to the end. It is possible that satiety is felt on the one side when all has been conferred, or on the other, when nothing remains to be desired.

17. Majesty, when it keeps itself aloof and invisible, appears far more imposing, because he to whom we are denied access, is always deemed a high personage; and that thing with which we are not familiarly acquainted is always regarded as a terrible affair.

18. It is the honour paid to riches that paves the way for exaltation to supreme power.

19. When equal privileges are no longer shared by all the individuals of the community, and when ambition and abuses have discarded moderation and honour, then royalty is established.

20. There is no sentiment so good but that the love of power may stifle it.

21. How glorious to have conquered our liberty by a victorious contest! How horrible the servitude in which we must again have been plunged by a defeat.

22. The admirers of the heroic spirit which is impatient under despotism, should recollect that, provided they have talents and character, they may, by a temporizing acquiescence, and a patient submission, be enabled to distinguish themselves not less than those illustrious victims whose vanity has impelled them to engage in desperate attempts without benefit to their country.

23. What greater horror can there be than to be exposed to the view of a persecuting oppressor, while he takes notes of our groans; while, with his florid visage, too brazen to betray a blush, he insults the pallid cheek of his victim, and marks with glee the shades which announce the progress of his sinking under his incarceration and sufferings! What barbarity to exult over the agony or distraction of a noble spirit overborne by oppression.

24. Despotism encourages superstition, because the reverence it enforces for the priesthood strengthens its own tyranny.

25. The mania of the vulgar mind is to believe the most firmly that which is the least comprehensible.

26. Ignorance pins its faith to that it does not comprehend; its exalted notions of knowledge, and its illiterate reverence for learning, dispose it willingly to give credence to whatever is mysterious.

27. The vulgar concern not themselves about reason or truth; they generally pronounce according to their prejudices, and seldom from rational conviction.

28. Prudence acquaints very few with the art of distinguishing immediately between vice and virtue; between that which is beneficial and that which is injurious: the multitude follow the example of others.

29. When once a fearful impression is made on the mind it easily delivers itself up to superstition.

30. The decisions of ignorance are always made without consideration.

31. Uncertainty and precipitation give weight to falsehood; time and reflection are the tests of truth.

32. Fanaticism is an obstinate vice.

33. The credit given to popular traditions, and the fictions substituted for truth, and these two errors being accredited in ensuing ages—these are the cause of that obscurity in which the most important facts are veiled.

34. The multitude, influenced by the vanity so natural to human ignorance firmly apply to themselves all the magnificent promises of

pretended revelation, and calamity itself is not capable of undeceiving them.

35. Shallow minds are capable but of little foresight or sagacity, and are easily inflated with vain expectations.

36. We should avoid giving any credit to those fables which are received with such avidity by the multitude; and we should rely rather on those natural facts which have not been transformed, and which cannot be distorted, by the propensity to listen to and swell the marvellous.

37. We should not use words to mystify things.

38. The stupid crowd see apparitions in appearances occasioned entirely by fortuitous combinations.

39. The credulity of people's minds construe very naturally phenomena into omens.

40. At first the movements of blind enthusiasm proceed at a furious rate, but its vehemence relaxes after a time.

41. The miracle of restoring sight to the blind, by means of spittle applied to their eyes, was attributed to the Emperor Vespasian, by the aid of the god Serapis.

42. Obstinate and inveterate diseases of the body cannot be cured except by violent and painful operations; it is the same with those of the mind; they require remedies as powerful as the passions by which they were produced.

43. In exalted station, to do that which is most just will be found also to be most advantageous.

44. To be fully informed without betraying his knowledge; to pardon slight offences, but to punish crimes severely; to be not always inflexible, but sometimes to be influenced by an offender's contrition; to be inclined rather to prevent than to prosecute malversations, and for that end to appoint those only to offices and employments who were incapable of corruption: these were the principles of Agricola.

45. Sejanus, the prime minister of Tiberius, was as expert in throwing a shade over the merits of others, as in representing himself in a favourable light; alike arrogant and fawning, under the guise of a modest demeanour, he dissembled his unbounded ambition; hence, his display and liberality at one time, but oftener his vigilance and unwearied application; qualities not less pernicious when they are exercised as means for arriving at absolute power.

46. There exists but little concord amongst those who occupy high stations.

47. To be influenced by jealousy of colleagues, and to be at variance with superiors, is a species of contest in which triumph is without glory, and defeat too humiliating.

48. Elevated station excites a few to virtue, but it is a burthen under which others are crushed.

49. Such is the rock on which many persons, even of merit, are wrecked; when, instead of waiting patiently for an advancement

that is assured but slow, they push their efforts prematurely at the risk of their entire downfall.

50. It is not easy to be moderate in the enjoyment of what we fancy may be of short continuance.

51. Ambition reimburses itself for that which it dissipates by having recourse to crime.

52. The ambitious are lavish of their own money, because they count upon that of the state.

53. A rapacious, and oftentimes mistaken policy, leads the ambitious to attempt untried and dangerous encroachments.

54. In the collection of taxes under a tyrannical system, the annoying contrivances of avarice are even a greater vexation than the taxes themselves.

55. A multiplicity of laws denotes great corruption in a state.

56. A sense of propriety should be our own restraint; their necessities will be some check upon the poor; and the rich will be rendered harmless by their satiety; their money-bags will be bail for them.

57. Before the enactment of a law for the punishment of an offence, we are cautious of transgressing from fear of giving occasion for such law; but when once a prohibition is disregarded with impunity, we feel no longer any restraint, and the point of honour ceases to operate as a restriction.

58. Public measures are often influenced by private considerations.

59. Even in our debates the voices of a few decide the questions; the rest join in the cry as they are led.

60. Dissensions and troubles are viewed with triumph by the disaffected.

61. Turbulence of character prompts some to revolt; but poverty and the dread of starvation urge many to rebellion from necessity.

62. Determined villains display the desperation of vice rather than the energy of virtue.

63. The populace take but little interest in public affairs, unless it is when their own means of subsistence are in question.

64. The mob shout aloud that which is put in their mouths, in adulation of princes whose frowns or smiles do not reach them, and without caring whether their praises be just or false.

65. The vile populace, under a monarchy, acts always in the extreme; it makes itself feared when it is not kept in dread; it is ready to lend itself as the base instrument for accomplishing the ruffian crimes of any tyrant who makes it tremble.

66. The populace is impetuous and presumptuous; ready for tumult, but destitute of courage; when they have lost their leader they become immediately panic-struck, irresolute, and dispirited.

67. The temper of the multitude is, to strive each one to cast on another the blame due to himself.

68. In aspiring to the throne, the difficulty lies in advancing the first step; but this surmounted, there will be afterwards no lack of supplies or partisans.

69. The more we resolve over in our own minds the different events that have happened either in ancient or modern times, the more we are impressed in all respects with the vanity of human concerns, and with the sense that worldly affairs are affected by casualities the most trifling.

70. Fortune has sometimes preferred to the throne an obscure individual, rather than him who seemed to be destined for that elevation, by the united voices, wishes, and estimation of all.

71. The research is not without its use, to trace out the circumstances which at first view seem insignificant, but which have often been the primary causes leading to great events.

72. Is it possible that every thing—even our manners—are subject, like the seasons, to periodical changes?

73. The ancients have not excelled us in all respects.

74. Human malignity has a propensity to extol that which is ancient, in order to disparage that which is modern.

75. With regard to the arts, and to morality, there are many examples, in our own times, from which posterity will derive their lessons.

76. Unless regulated by prudence, the best intentions will often be attended by unfortunate results.

77. After the failure of our enterprizes, it will be too late to regret that we had not adopted different measures.

78. Our most vexatious losses are those which are owing to our own remissness.

79. A regard for our personal safety is a constant preventive against our engaging in any dangerous enterprizes.

80. Address may accomplish that to which force is inadequate.

81. A happy conjuncture has often produced effects to accomplish which prudence would not have been equal.

82. It is one trait of expertness readily to take advantage of the neglects of others.

83. The rigid enforcement of justice may be thought to operate severely on individuals; but this evil is compensated for by the general good.

84. Innocence has often fallen a victim to the first outcry raised by indignation against the crime, and the person suspected of committing it; public clamour should be allowed to subside before carrying into effect a sentence of condemnation.

85. The hope of gain, or the dread of torture, may tempt any one to make such an avowal as is required of him, or to bring a false accusation against another.

86. The perpetration of crime is generally revealed beforehand by the behaviour of the criminal.

87. The aspect of places does not lend itself to disguise, like the countenances of men.

88. In peace, justice is of some effect; but in war the innocent and guilty suffer alike.

89. Conquerors never care about morality.

90. We see military men usually deficient in a certain talent of finesse in conducting civil affairs, because their sense of justice being accustomed to be warped by a sense of the power they hold in their hands, they decide at once, without much consideration, about right or wrong, and are not restrained by those niceties that are of weight in courts of law.

91. A combination of civil and military talents is a rare occurrence in history.

92. When peace can only be preserved on terms that are degrading, it is better not to accede to them, even though a disastrous struggle should be the result.

93. War itself is preferable to remaining in a state of uncertain peace.

94. The earth may not yield us the means of living; it cannot deprive us of those for dying.

95. Conquest will avail little to the victors, when those who are reduced to subjection are afterwards oppressed.

96. A sincere alliance is never maintained between the conquerors and the conquered: a compliance with the manners and usages of a subdued people is the surest means by which they can be retained under dominion.

97. That which is termed civilizing a nation may only be binding them in stricter bonds of servitude.

98. Our enemy should be opposed manfully, and without disguise, rather than by undermining and secret machinations.

99. Humanity towards a subdued foe is as noble as the valour displayed in encountering him.

100. During war, one advantage is merged in a still greater triumph.

101. It will be time enough to think of victory when the means of preventing defeat shall first have been assured.

102. Such is the extreme injustice that ensues a battle: each one appropriates the glory of a victory to himself; an individual alone is responsible for defeat.

103. In the storming of a town the pillage falls into the hands of the soldiers; a capitulation places the spoil in the power of the chiefs.

104. In civil wars the claims of the soldiery are allowed to make more noise than those of their chiefs.

105. Movements of cavalry often decide the victory speedily.

106. The army that conducts itself most peaceably out of battle will, in battle, be the more formidable.

107. Those tremblers who, on the eve of danger, insinuate their prudent reflections, become altogether as confident when they are again in safety; and, to credit them, their conduct was that of so many heroes.

108. The tyrant, fear, deprives us of the power to resolve on what steps to be taken in danger.

109. When affairs become desperate, every one commands ; none execute.

110. During a panic the least thing startles us ; every thing alarms us.

111. When we are under the influence of fear, our ears are alike open to the counsels of the prudent, and the clamorous suggestions of the multitude.

112. Cowards readily engage in those contests, all the perils of which are to be encountered by the brave.

113. The coward is generally a bully.

114. The tongues of cowards are ready enough to provoke by their injurious insolence ; but when they see their chastisement in preparation, they then become mute.

115. Great talkers are formidable in nothing besides their tongues.

116. There is more courage in living to sustain misfortune, than in shifting out of it by suicide ; resolute minds persist to hope in spite of fortune ; fear adds to the despair of the pusillanimous.

117. Amongst those whom misfortune has rendered weary of living, there are moments when even those who are most resolutely bent on steps of desperation cannot divest themselves of their hankering attachment to life.

118. Many who appear to be the subjects of adversity are happy ; and many, whose riches are immense, are much to be pitied ; it suffices for this, that the former support with firmness their hardships, and that the latter are incapable of enjoying properly their fortune.

119. In adversity, no dependence can be placed upon others.

120. Firmness is derived from suffering misfortune ; but we are corrupted by prosperity.

121. There is one order of base minds who, without caring either about virtue or vice, calculate solely what they shall gain by adopting their line of conduct.

122. The principle of integrity is weakened by a thirst for gain.

123. Where nothing is to be gained, it is more likely that the place yields no source of profit than that the avarice of man should be at a fault.

124. All men regard with jealous eyes those who have acquired fortunes, while they themselves have remained in their former condition ; and from none is moderate deportment in elevation more required than from those whom others have seen their equals.

125. The sense of obligation is no longer agreeable than while the means are possessed to return an equivalent ; unequal favours expose to hatred, rather than give occasion for gratitude.

126. Gratitude is irksome ; but how sweet is revenge !

127. Venomous rancour generally characterizes the aversions of kindred.

128. Cutting sarcasms, founded in the main upon facts, are never pardoned.

129. In country towns, people are not backward to utter their suspicions.

130. Amongst our friends, we are apt to expect that the liberality of our gifts should release us from the necessity of attending to the regulation of our tempers.

131. In making efforts to be pleasant, we expose ourselves as buffoons.

132. Time, fortune—sometimes the passions, or a mistake—suffice for interrupting, transferring, or extinguishing friendships.

133. If we are insensible to renown, we shall also be indifferent to virtue.

134. An excessive desire to acquire reputation leads us to announce our own merits, and to have recourse to trick and artifice, in order to set ourselves off to advantage.

135. The desire to distinguish one's self is the last passion that expires, even in the bosom of a sage.

136. All worth is disparaged by vulgar malignity.

137. It is not possible that a shining reputation and perfect tranquillity should be enjoyed at the same time.

138. To resent that which has been spoken of us injuriously, is to acknowledge that we have given cause for it; when disregarded, it has no bad effect.

139. The only remedy against perfidy is to let it pass unnoticed.

140. The greater fidelity is likely to be experienced from that man whom we have proved the more worthy.

141. Designing villany easily obtains the ascendancy over confiding simplicity and modest worth.

142. Nothing is more common than for us to hate those whom we have injured.

143. Those mistake who regard prodigality as being liberality; many are able to dissipate their fortunes, but few know how to be generous.

144. Ill-judged liberalities only do harm.

145. A man's own circumstances must alone determine whether or not his establishment be too sumptuous in respect of servants, plate, &c.

146. The audacity of servants causes a change in the naturally kind disposition of a master.

147. The servants in a house, at the sight of their master, think to recommend themselves by striving which shall be foremost in eagerness to show his zeal.

148. Flattery is the more shameful and despicable when it comes from one whose term of existence is drawing to a close; and it ought to cover such a one with infamy.

149. It is wrong to inflate the vain and inconsiderate minds of youth by premature distinction.

150. The chief duty of friendship towards the dead, is not to shed tears of weakness over their remains, but to attend to the

requests they uttered, while living, and to fulfil their recommendations.

151. Those who display their grief with most ostentation, are those who are least affected.

152. The only true homage that the affection of survivors can pay to the cherished memory of the dead, is, for a wife or a child, to regard constantly the virtues, the actions, the expressions, of an honoured husband or parent; and to concern themselves about their moral excellences rather than about their corpses.

153. Our domestic calamities should be buried in silence and in sorrow.

154. The extreme misconduct of one man's wife displays to greater advantage the contrast of another's wife, who is altogether as irreproachable.

155. Woman's virtue lost, her profligacy is unbounded.

156. There remains nothing in the power of a woman to bestow, after she has made the sacrifice of her honour.

157. There is little prudence in love.

158. The question was debated in the Roman senate, whether or not women should be excluded from following their husbands in the army. Cecina Severus said—"The sex is not only weak and incapable of enduring fatigues, but they are cruel, ambitious, and domineering, wherever they get the upper hand." Valerius Messalinus, on the other hand, argued—"What solace can be more allowable than that supplied by a wife? Some women may have become exacting and arbitrary; some husbands may have suffered from the perversity of their wives; but is every bachelor a competent judge in the case? It is generally the fault of the husband when the wife transgresses her proper bounds. Because a few men have been so weak as to submit to a female tyrant, ought the rest to be deprived of the faithful sharers of their joys and their sorrows?" The counsel of Cecina was not adopted.

159. Eloquence does not always wear the same aspect; with the variation of circumstances, and of the temper and taste of the times, there will be a corresponding change in the cast and figures of rhetoric.

160. Brilliant eloquence is like a flame; it requires to be fed with fresh fuel, and to be excited by frequent stirring; it is in burning that it is resplendent.

161. The impetuosity of eloquence hurries along with it the minds even of those who have usually been circumspect and cautious.

162. When eloquence was at its height, children were not sent to the hut of a hireling nurse, but educated in the bosom of their parents.

163. Those works that have been meditated over during leisure and retirement, previously to publication, seem to gain in character as they descend to posterity.

164. A strange hand and a senseless material cannot represent

the semblance of our mind ; our conduct alone can furnish the faithful portrait of its traits.

165. I do not mean to censure the custom of preserving, in brass or marble, the figures and likenesses of eminent men ; but busts and statues, like their originals, are frail and perishable. The mind and character cannot be exhibited by the hand of an artist with unconscious matter ; the record of our virtues and achievements can alone, in some degree, trace the resemblance ; painting and sculpture fail to reach or approach the correct features of the mind.

166. A robust constitution, agile limbs, and an acute countenance, indicate a corresponding strength of mind.

167. Gluttony is the indulgence of a beastly propensity, bred by the habitual abuse of the appetite.

168. Habitual indolence entices us into a fondness for it ; and, after a while, we enjoy that state of inaction which at first was hardly supportable.

169. When we have renounced all reliance on our own exertions, our talents dwindle away, and our incompetency is ever on the increase.

170. Inconstant minds frame and renounce their purposes with equal facility.

171. To seek solitude, in order to ruminate over our injuries, is an indication of a temper that is vindictive.

172. Even our vices find favour when they are exhibited under an amiable character.

173. Vices are wont to assume very specious names.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS OF THEOGNIS

1. Where can we find the man who is so firm and courageous as to dare to oppose the current by which others allow themselves to be borne along, whose integrity is alike in his heart and on his lips, and whom the thirst of gain can never induce to divest himself of shame ?

2. Fools with the foolish, just and wise with the friends of wisdom and probity, we partake of the character of those by whom we are surrounded.

3. With the good we learn to cherish virtue ; amongst the wicked we find our hatred of vice wax weaker and weaker in our hearts ; and very soon we lose sight of reason, which had been our guide.

4. O, my mind—my silly mind !—Resign thyself, then, to present joy ! Other mortals will very soon succeed to my place, and I shall be buried in the ground

5. After our death, it is indifferent whether we are extended on tapestry or on briars ; on the rock, or on a bed of down.

6. Nothing is worse than prejudice; nothing preferable to experience.

7. How blind are we! We have but vain opinions, and ignorance is our condition; events disappoint all our projects and all our foresight; we find ourselves constantly controlled by the laws of inevitable necessity.

8. We shall never find that events will succeed entirely according to our wishes.

9. We find every day that our expectations are disappointed, and yet we persist unceasingly in forming new projects.

10. How shall it ever be possible that so many should be satisfied who have the same desire? The folly of men, and their depravity, are caused by their love of riches.

11. Riches hide vice, and poverty conceals virtue.

12. We are always wishing for more than we possess; but want has been less fatal to many than profusion.

13. Get rich; this is the only virtue; none other is comprehended by people in general.

14. If a man avoids expense, and concerns himself about nothing but to amass wealth, then his prudence is extolled.

15. Do we see any woman refuse a contemptible husband, provided that his wealth is great? No; she prefers hearing it said that she is the wife of a rich rather than of a virtuous man.

16. Does it happen that I am unfortunate? I meet my former friends, who avert their faces, and avoid seeing me. Does my fortune improve? Do I meet with a favourable circumstance? It is, then, who shall be first to greet me; I find none but friends everywhere.

17. The wise man ought never to lose his tranquillity of mind; suffer not thyself to be dejected by misfortune; triumph not immoderately in prosperity.

18. Neither abandon thyself to excessive joy in prosperity, nor yield to extreme grief in adversity; remember that there will be an end to thy affairs.

19. Even the good we do will very soon be forgotten.

20. Thou art just; let thy virtue form thy recompense and thy felicity. Some will speak well of thee; others, ill; the happiest of mortals are those about whom others least concern themselves.

21. Grow rich, if possible, but without committing injustice; be capable, but without becoming knaves.

22. Provide against old age; resources are then necessary; endeavour even to leave something behind, for few tears will be shed at your funeral, unless there be somewhat left to pay for them.

23. We should regulate our expenses according to our means, without dissipation, and without sordid penuriousness.

24. Thou canst leave no inheritance to thy children more precious than that modesty in which thou hast trained them up, and which always accompanies virtue.

25. Man is broken down by age; so he is also by a fever; but

much more so by poverty ; he, whom the last depresses, can no longer speak, act, nor raise his head ; his hands and his tongue are alike tied.

26. Subsisting on a little, may I never experience the miseries that attend extreme penury.

27. Prefer mediocrity in the bosom of justice to the abundance which iniquities procure.

28. All the virtues are comprised in justice ; if thou art just, thou art a man of sterling worth.

29. Poor, but virtuous, I see the wicked swimming in prosperity ; and let them keep their wealth, for I would not exchange conditions with them ; I have it in my power to preserve my virtue ; but they are not able to command fortune.

30. Study men well, and you will find that all vices, all talents, and all virtues, are possessed by them.

31. Every man has done some good ; all have sometimes done wrong ; none can boast of being perfectly correct.

32. The good cause their excellencies to take possession of our hearts ; the wicked deprive us even of our former virtue.

33. We lose our pains in abruptly endeavouring to change the hearts of the wicked.

34. Few men unite merit with personal beauty ; the combination of both is no small advantage.

35. While yet young, or in the prime of life, profit well by your advantages, and form your minds to virtue.

36. In youth the mind possesses its greatest energies.

37. Beware of engaging with silly enthusiasm in any party feeling to further the objects of others, and where thou wouldst only be losing thy pains.

38. Press forward not too eagerly ; follow in the middle path at a steady pace ; this will conduct thee to virtue.

39. Study the inclinations and desires of those in whose company thou art, and learn to demean thyself accordingly.

40. Above all things, fall not into the habit of uttering useless complaints ; thou wouldst find all hearts soon become insensible to thy misfortunes.

41. It is difficult to avoid being too diffident, or confident to an excess.

42. When we act precipitately, we cannot avoid blame.

43. The past cannot be recalled ; but let us be cautious for the future ; it ought entirely to occupy our attention.

44. Before extolling a man, take care to be well acquainted with him ; observe his propensities, his disposition, and manners. There are some people who are nothing but tinsel ; crafty in concealing the perversity of their tempers, they have words and faces that they can adapt to every occasion.

45. Be especially on thy guard against the enemy who seeks to lull thee with friendly expressions ; if thou placest thyself in his

power, he will consult but for vengeance, and nothing will be able to disarm him.

46. It is neither difficult to praise or to blame ; it is an art familiar to the wicked : interest inspires them to be lavish of their praise ; detraction is their pleasure.

47. If I am not on friendly terms with a worthy man, I will at least take care not to speak evil of him ; I will never commend the wicked man who is attached to me.

48. I despise the wretch by whose envenomed tongue I find myself persecuted.

49. A gnawing uneasiness takes its seat in the heart of the unjust and overbearing man.

50. A deceitful heart is more dangerous for a friend than for an enemy.

51. If thy professions are insincere—if thou hast on thy lips friendship, but indifference in thy heart—I prefer thy enmity.

52. It is difficult to deceive him who entertains no good will towards us ; but it is easy to impose on the confiding disposition of friendship.

53. Nothing is more difficult to discover than the duplicity of man. With a little practice one easily detects the alloy in gold ; but not with the same ease can the pretended good-will, which the pretended friend shows in his face, be distinguished from the deceit which is lurking in his heart.

54. There are persons who are always exacting, and who are never satisfied ; by a single instance of refusal to gratify their wishes all the fruits of past favours are lost, and the wavering flame of friendship, which had been kindled but for a time, is extinguished for ever from their hearts.

55. You will meet with but few of those well-tried friends who will dare to acknowledge their connexion with you, even in adversity.

56. Beware of exposing thyself, for a slight fault, to the loss of thy friend ; refuse to listen to the calumniators who accuse him ; without indulgence, friendship cannot exist.

57. I am not in circumstances to assist a great number of the distressed ; but I do not repulse the friend who has recourse to my benevolence.

58. It is difficult for a sensible man to endure long conversation with a fool ; but it is not difficult for him to sustain silence for a long time.

59. Silence is a sad penance for the incessant talker, and an ignorant babbler a grievous annoyance to those who hear him ; for he is offensive without its being possible to be rid of him, and such a one is a plague, which poisons the enjoyment of all good fellowship.

60. Nothing is supported with more uneasiness than constraint.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE CHARACTERS OF THEOPHRASTUS

1. Avoid, as you would the most dangerous serpent, those people who have no simplicity of manners, and whose whole conduct is specious ; beware of too easily yielding your confidence to their insidious and subtle address : no conduct is more detestable.

2. Flattery may be regarded as a villanous language, which suits the interest of him who has recourse to it. What does the flatterer do and say ?—That which is calculated to please him who sees and hears him.

3. Complaisance, taking the word in its worst sense, signifies a habit of conforming to the sentiments of others, and lending oneself to do whatever may please, without being restrained by a principle of integrity.

4. Loquacity consists of incontinence in speaking.

5. The babbler's vice is, talking incessantly and never reflecting.

6. Run with all your might ; escape from the troublesome man : it is very hard to have to do with those bores who know not how to distinguish your moments of leisure from those when you are most closely occupied.

7. To be in the way, and to be always presenting himself when and where he is not wanted, is the character of a bore.

8. The disagreeable man is troublesome to society without occasioning any positive harm.

9. The fault of officious people is an incommoding affectation of wishing to be serviceable, and which manifests itself in all they do and say.

10. Effrontery consists in braving out shame both in deeds and words.

11. Inattention to the observances of good society constitutes rusticity.

12. Impudence displays itself by making an open joke of that which offends decency.

13. The character of the sordid man consists in his despising honour, by reason of his thirst for discreditable saving.

14. Avarice is an excess of baseness—a contemptible concern to avoid the smallest expense.

15. An excessive saving in little expenses constitutes niggardliness.

16. Mistrust consists in suspecting the integrity of all the world.

17. Slovenliness consists in an extreme negligence of one's person, so as to be capable of exciting disgust.

18. Timidity is the diffidence of a mind that is too susceptible of fear.

19. Blushing is the complexion of virtue.

20. Absence of mind may be judged to arise from indolence, and from sluggishness of temperament.

21. A certain rigidity in speaking and of manner in the ordinary course of life constitutes arrogance.

22. Detraction is manifested by the language; but it springs from an inclination of the mind to surmise nought but evil, and still to aggravate that.

23. A dissatisfied temper is the effect of desiring much more than one might reasonably expect to obtain.

24. Vanity consists in a puerile and mean anxiety to meet with vain applause.

25. Ostentation consists in making a parade of advantages we do not possess.

26. The character of haughtiness is to esteem none but oneself, and to show contempt for every one besides.

27. Superstition is nothing but a misplaced fear of some fancied supernatural phantasm or divinity.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL REFLECTIONS OF THEOPHRASTUS.

1. Since it is the lot of man to die so soon, it behoves him to enjoy life as it passes.

2. We often reject the greatest enjoyments of life with disdain, in order that we may fatigue ourselves in the pursuit of a vain shadow of glory.

3. Either give over study, for it is very laborious, or go perseveringly through with it, if you aspire after glory; at any rate, make yourselves happy.

4. Nothing is more unprofitable than the vain pursuit of glory.

5. Vanity is of much greater consideration in life than utility.

6. We scarcely begin to live before we perceive the approach of death.

7. The envious are more unhappy than others in this respect, that they are troubled not only by their own misfortunes, but also at the good fortune of others.

8. In general, one's own miseries only are felt; but the envious person is equally afflicted by his own mishaps and by the good which happens to others.

9. The falsehoods invented by envy and propagated by calumny, may have some force at first, but their effects will not last long.

10. The good need but few laws, for things are not accommodated to laws, but laws are for things.

11. Few laws are wanted for virtuous people; their conduct is not regulated by the laws, but serves to model the laws upon.

12. Acquire a respect for yourself, and it will then be out of every one's power to make you sensible of shame.

13. Thou preservest silence in company; if thou art a fool thou art in the right; but thou dost wrong if thou hast sense.

14. It is more safe trusting to an unbridled horse than to an intemperate speech.

15. We owe to our wives and children all the tender care and assistance that are dictated by humanity; the last will compensate us by their services and by their attentions to us during our declining years, and the former repay our kindness by the tender assiduities they lavish upon us in our infirmities, and by the endearing interest with which they participate our joys and our sorrows.

16. It is in the bosom of her family that a woman ought to display her sense and prudence.

17. If thou art under the necessity of forming a partnership with any one, let it at least be with a man who possesses order, firmness, and application.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SELECTIONS FROM THE MORAL SAYINGS ATTRIBUTED TO
THE WISE MEN OF GREECE.

1. THALES.

1. Necessity is all-powerful—space infinite.

2. Eclipses of the sun are occasioned by interventions of the moon; and eclipses of the moon are caused by interpositions of the earth between that globe and the sun.

3. Pleasure of body consists in health, and felicity of mind in knowledge; health, competency, and intelligence, form the chief sources of happiness.

4. Indolence is irksome, intemperance injurious, and ignorance intolerable.

5. Happy is the family that abounds not in too great affluence, and that is sufficiently removed from the reach of poverty.

6. In order to live justly and be respected, we must abstain from doing that we blame in others.

7. Whatever we know to be right, that we should do, even though our conduct should meet with reproach and ridicule.

8. The most difficult thing is to know ourselves; the easiest, to give advice; and the most pleasant, to obtain the gratification of our desires.

9. We should stop the mouth of slander by prudence.

10. Nothing is felt more keenly than the malign shafts of calumny, and even the worthiest man is hurt if they reach him.

11. We ought never to let any expressions drop from our lips that

might be turned to our prejudice; and we should live with our friends as with persons who might possibly become our enemies.

12. Miss not your opportunity, and tell nothing before-hand of your intentions; for you might fail in your project, and furnish your enemies with a subject for their jeers.

13. If you become security for another, you may lay your account in a loss; or, he that avoids suretyship is sure.

14. It will help us to bear our own ill-fortune, if we reflect on the greater misfortunes of others.

15. We do well to conceal our domestic evils.

16. Hope is the only good which is common to all mankind; when all other resources have failed, we still retain hope.

17. Such as are careless of themselves, will hardly be attentive to another's concerns.

18. Forget not your friends.

19. Affectionately regard your parents; and, if they occasion you some unpleasantness, learn to endure it.

20. Parents may expect from their children the same degree of dutiful behaviour as they themselves paid to their own parents.

21. Take pains to correct the blemishes of the mind rather than those of the face.

22. That commonwealth is best circumstanced in which the citizens are neither excessively rich nor exceedingly poor.

23. Monarchy, in any shape, is but tyranny.

II. SOLON.

1. Know thyself.

2. As long as thou shalt live, seek to improve thyself; presume not that old age brings with itself wisdom: it is better to learn late than never.

3. Make reason your guide; give to serious subjects their due consideration.

4. In everything you do, consider the end.

5. Conjecture of things that are not apparent from those that are apparent.

6. A man ought to fear nothing, but that his end exclude not philosophy.

7. We should be cautious not to say all that we know.

“ Of every man be careful, lest he bear
A sword conceal'd within his breast; a clear
Aspect, a double tongue, a mind severe.”

8. No fool can be silent amidst his cups.

9. Voluptuous indulgences only occasion pain, and they ought to be avoided; or, “ fly pleasures, for they drag thee into sorrows.”

10. Satiety comes of riches, and ennui results from satiety.

11. Those are happy who owe not their wealth to injustice, and whose expenses do not occasion them inconvenience.

12. Many bad men become rich; many good men languish in misery: would a good man exchange his virtue for the treasures of the wicked? Certainly not: we can preserve our conscience in all its purity; but riches may quickly pass into different hands.

13. If all men should throw their loads of misfortune together into one huge heap, each one would gladly resume his own portion rather than divide an equal share out of the common stock.

14. We should consider integrity as of more weight than oaths; or observe the purport of what thou promisest more strictly than an oath.

15. To one who excused himself for lying in jest, he replied—"These jests will become serious falsehoods; what shall circumscribe our tongue if we pass the limits of truth?"

16. The sentence you pronounce on another, be willing to abide by yourself in a similar case.

17. Be mild towards those who are thy dependants; be not arrogant.

18. He who has learned to obey will know how to command.

19. We should not be hasty in forming new friendships, nor in terminating those of long standing.

20. Give not to thy friends those counsels which may be most agreeable, but those which may be most for their advantage.

21. Marriage should not be mercenary; but the ends proposed should be issue, love, and friendship.

22. Sit not as judge, for the condemned will esteem thee as their enemy.

23. Laws are like cobwebs, that entangle the weak, but are broken through by the strong.

24. That commonwealth is best ordered where the people as eagerly prosecute wrongs done to others as they do those done to themselves.

25. That king would become most glorious who should convert his monarchy into a democracy.

III. CHILO.

1. To be provident for the future, and to be guided by reason, is the virtue of a man.

2. Death itself is less horrible than the phantom in whose shape our fancy is accustomed to regard it.

3. Do not desire impossibilities.

4. To close a life of long duration is desirable.

5. No acquirement is more difficult than self-knowledge; self-love always exaggerates our merits in our own estimation.

6. Refrain thy tongue from outstripping thy thoughts; or think before you speak.

7. Rule thy tongue, especially at a feast, if thou wouldst not expose thyself.

8. In a ship at sea, or in a tent during an encampment, a man is

necessitated to brook an unpleasant companion; but to mix indiscriminately with all sorts of people in general life is indiscreet.

9. To keep secrets, to employ our leisure well, to bear patiently with injuries, and to guard well that our tongues do not go beyond reason, these are duties of difficult performance.

10. Govern well your own household.

11. Bridle your anger.

12. We speak evil of others; and should we not fear the evil they may say of us?

13. Speak no ill of thy neighbour, if thou wouldst not hear what will trouble thee.

14. It is not more cowardly to attack an unarmed man than to speak ill of those who are not present to defend themselves.

15. Threaten no one, for that is like a weak woman.

16. Love with such limitation as if hereafter you might chance to hate; hate so, as that you might at some time, perhaps, love.

17. Never ridicule the unfortunate.

18. If we considered all that others suffer, our own complaints would be more moderate.

19. When our friends invite us to a feast, it signifies little if we arrive at a late hour; but when they call for our consolations, we should fly to them in an instant. Visit your friend in misfortune rather than in his prosperity.

“ The benefits thou giv'st, remember never;
Of those thou dost receive, be mindful ever.”

20. Let thy mildness excuse thy power; dread to be feared.

“ Me may the mean not fear, nor great despise.”

21. In conversation, avoid vehement gesticulations; in walking, do not appear to be always upon business of life and death; for a rapid gait indicates a mind void of composure.

22. Honest loss is preferable to dishonourable gain; for by the one a man suffers but once; by the other, his suffering is lasting.

23. Gold tries a man.

24. Trust not the officious man who is always busying himself about the affairs of others.

25. That commonwealth is best, where the people mind the law more than the lawyers.

IV. PITTACUS.

1. Let not your opportunity slip by; or, seize upon occasion; or, be watchful for opportunity.

2. The prudent man avoids evil; the courageous man sustains it.

3. The first office of prudence is to foresee impending evils, and prevent them.

4. The gods themselves, if gods there were, must be subjected to necessity.

5. Make no display of thy good fortune; but in avoiding envy, do not excite pity.

6. Whatever you do, do it well.

7. Never talk of your schemes before they are executed, lest, if you fail to accomplish them, you be exposed to the double mortification of disappointment and ridicule.

8. Do not that to your neighbour which you would take ill from him

9. Reproach not thy friend, though he neglect thee a little.

10. Power discovers the man.

11. It is against nature to love an enemy.

12. Addict thyself to sobriety.

13. I am pleased with the abode which exhibits nothing superfluous, and where I find everything that is necessary.

14. An equal marriage is best.

15. The sea is faithless; thirst of gain is insatiable.

16. Though you seek much, you will hardly find an honest man.

“Hard to be truly honest; this
The Pittacean sentence is.”

V. BIAS.

“What is our chiefest good?—A conscience free;
Our greatest ill?—Man’s man’s worst enemy:
Poor?—th’ avaricious; rich?—who nought desires;
A wife’s best dower?—the fame chaste life acquires;
Wise?—who hath the power to hurt, but wants the will;
A fool?—who wants the power, and yet would kill.”

1. A good conscience only is superior to fear.

2. In action, preserve self-possession; in opportunity, be prompt; in danger, wary; in labour, patient; in determining, just; in discourse, persuasive; let your manners be ingenuous; in your nature, be generous.

3. Gain your point by persuasion, rather than by having recourse to violence.

4. Be neither simple nor subtle.

5. Listen patiently, and speak not unless it be to the purpose.

6. Be deliberate in resolving, but prompt in executing.

7. From youth to age acquire knowledge, for it will be more sure than all other possessions.

8. We should so live as though our life might be long or short.

9. It is a proof of a weak and uninformed mind to desire immortality; which is morally impossible.

10. No feeling mind can be insensible to the sufferings of others.

11. It is a great infelicity not to be able to bear misfortunes patiently; great minds alone can support sudden reverses of fortune with firmness.

12. Gain that results from labour is precious.

13. Hope is the most consoling thing in the world.

14. A bad man judges every one to be false like himself; it is easy to impose upon the good.

15. Flatter not a worthless person on account of his wealth.

16. Many men are faithless ; therefore, in friendship we should converse with caution, remembering that it might possibly be converted into enmity.

17. If you venture to decide in a difference between two of your friends, be assured you will lose one of them ; it is better to be an umpire in a dispute betwixt our enemies ; for, in that case, he in whose favour your decision is given may possibly become your friend.

18. The talent of those people who give their whole attention to useless studies, is full of sagacity when applied to learned trifles ; but they are stupified when smitten by a ray of solid intelligence.

19. Those who busy themselves in acquiring vain knowledge resemble owls, which see only in the night, but the light blinds them.

20. To some graceless sailors who, in a tremendous tempest, became alarmed, and implored the gods to save them, he said, “ Don’t pray so loud, that it may escape the gods’ notice that you are here.”

21. During an invasion, while all around him were collecting their most valuable effects, and preparing for flight, it was observed with surprise that he took no pains to preserve anything ; and being asked the reason, he replied, “ I carry my treasures with me.”

VI. CLEOBULUS.

1. Avoid excess.

2. Be acquainted with virtue, but a stranger to vice.

3. Knowledge is preferable to ignorance.

4. Be moderate in your pleasures.

5. Be not insolent in prosperity.

6. If rich, be not exalted ; if poor, be not dejected ; hold injustice in horror ; bridle thy tongue ; forego revenge ; do nothing with violence ; compose quarrels ; instruct thy children : such is the character of virtue.

7. In abundance of words there is generally abundance of ignorance.

8. Ignorance and loquacity are as commonly found united as any two things in the world.

9. Be more desirous to hear than to speak.

10. Hear willingly, but not give credence too hastily.

11. Learn to bear the reverses of fortune.

12. Laugh not in compliance with him who derides others, for you would incur their hatred.

13. Never practise satire ; its victim would become thine enemy.

14. Be neither vain nor ungrateful.

15. Employ thy time in some occupation that is useful.

16. Be kind to your friends, that they may continue such ; and to your enemies, that they may become your friends.

17. The envy of your friends is as much to be feared as the malice of our enemies.

18. Happy is the family, when he at the head of it is more loved than feared.

19. Neither caress nor chide your wife before company, for the first is folly, the latter rudeness.

20. Choose a wife among your equals; for if you take her from a rank more elevated than your own, you will be likely to become the slave of your wife's relations, instead of gaining kinsmen.

21. Deem the enemy of thy country to be thine own enemy.

22. I should like to live in a country where the citizens feared the laws less than they feared shame.

VII. PERIANDER.

1. Industry overcomes every obstacle.

2. There is nothing which prudence cannot accomplish.

3. Repose is agreeable, temerity is dangerous, avarice is base.

4. Sensuality supplies but a momentary enjoyment; the pleasures of virtue are durable.

5. In prosperity be moderate; in adversity be prudent.

6. Disgrace not your parentage.

7. Perform your promises; betray not secrets.

8. Have dangerous promises been extorted from thee by force?—Thou hast promised nothing.

9. Be not content with reproving those who have committed faults; restrain those who are about to commit them.

10. So reproach thine enemy as if he might, ere long, be thy friend.

11. Be the same towards your friends, whether they are fortunate or unfortunate.

12. Conceal your misfortunes.

“Be not exalted when thy fortune's clear;
Nor be dejected if a storm appear.”

THE FOLLOWING IS A SELECTION FROM THE PRECEPTS OF THE
SEVEN SOPHISTS, COLLECTED BY SOSIADES.

1. Understand what thou learnest.

2. Comprehend what thou hearest.

3. Wishing to marry, avail thyself of opportunity.

4. Command thyself.

5. Relieve the wants of thy friends.

6. Apply thyself to discipline.

7. Emulate the wise.

8. Disparage no one.

9. Do what is just.

10. Husband thy time.

11. Shun deceit.

12. Determine equitably.

13. Abstain from bloodshed.

14. Defer not to give what thou intendest.

15. Envy none; eschew calumny.

16. Be on thy guard.
17. Enjoy what thou possessest.
18. Be modest in thy deportment.
19. Return benefits.
20. Hearing, understand.
21. Aim only at knowledge that may be acquired.
22. Give no occasion for reproach.
23. Curb thy tongue.
24. Repel attempts to be injurious.
25. Decide not rashly
26. Wait and see the end.
27. Converse mildly.
28. Be civil to all.
29. Do that whereof thou shalt not repent.
30. Counsel profitably.
31. Accomplish quickly.
32. Preserve amity.
33. Dissolve enmities.
34. Expect age.
35. Boast not of strength.
36. Confide not in wealth.
37. Be not weary of learning.
38. Be cautious in hazarding thyself.
39. Instruct the young.
40. Respect the aged.
41. Condole with the afflicted.
42. Be not troubled upon every occasion.
43. Promise never.
44. Be in childhood modest ; in youth, temperate ; in manhood, just ; in old age, prudent.
45. Live pleasantly.
46. Die untroubled.

CHAPTER XXX.

SELECTION OF MORAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL SENTIMENTS, ARRANGED
ACCORDING TO THE ALPHABETICAL NAMES OF VARIOUS AUTHORS.

ÆLIAN.

There are some defects of superannuation which I pass over—garrulity and procrastination. I only blame those old persons who complain incessantly—are perpetually inquisitive—who, through envy, contravene all the amusements of the young—who are humoursome and froward—who are covetous and avaricious, and whose propensities to sensuality survive their powers of gratifying them.

ÆSCHINES.

We appear most ridiculous when our actions and professions are not consistent.

ÆSOP.

[His fables being so generally known, it is not judged necessary to introduce his morals in this selection.]

AGRIPPA.

With union, even small undertakings prosper; but the grandest designs are ruined by discord.

ANACHARSIS.

1. Wise men propose measures, and fools determine them.
2. To possess the friendship of a single worthy person, is better than to have it professed to us by many that are unworthy.
3. How comes it to pass that those who forbid lying, themselves lie openly when they wish to profit by their impositions.
4. Every one should strive to attain the mastery of his tongue and of his appetites.
5. A vine bears three kinds of fruit: the first, pleasure; the second, intemperance; and the third, repentance, or mortification.
6. The first draught for health; the second, for pleasure; the third, for shame; and the fourth, for madness.
7. The best lesson of sobriety that can be furnished to youth is to exhibit to their view those that are suffering from the effects of excess—for them to view a drunken man in all his extravagance and degradation.
8. At a feast, when such characters were introduced as might furnish mirth for the company, he alone did not even smile; but afterwards, an ape being brought in, he laughed heartily at its tricks, saying, "That beast is naturally droll; but man's attempts to be so by art and study are ridiculous."
9. The question was put to him, "What in man is both good and evil?" he answered, "The tongue."
10. When asked, "What ship was safest?" "That which is in port," was his reply.
11. Being told, "A ship was four inches thick,"—"So far from death, then, are those who sail in her," said he.

ANAXAGORAS.

"With Anaxagoras, great nature's law
Is similarity."

LUCRETIUS.

1. One similar mode of existence prevails universally.
2. We should free our minds from all superstitious terrors, arising from the want of knowledge of physical causes.
3. The sun is an inanimate mass, and consequently not an object of adoration; the rainbow is the reflection of the solar rays from a

cloud; the moon is an opaque body, enlightened by the sun—a habitable world, its surface being divided into hills, dales, and waters; the fixed stars are sun-worlds, existing beyond our own solar and planetary system; the galaxy, or milky way, is occasioned by the combined light of many stars situated at the extremity of our sphere of observation.

4. He was indefatigable in his researches into nature, and ventured, on many occasions, to contradict and oppose the vulgar opinions and superstitions.

5. He ridiculed the Athenian priests for predicting an untoward event from the unusual appearance of a ram which had but one horn; and to convince the people that there was nothing unnatural or miraculous in the affair, he opened the head of the animal, and showed that its construction was such as necessarily to prevent the growth of the other horn.

6. The Athenians having been educated to faith in the doctrine that the sun is God, Anaxagoras was condemned to death by the authorities, because he affirmed that body to be without sense and knowledge.

7. Through his whole life he supported the character of a true philosopher. Superior to motives of avarice and ambition, he devoted himself to scientific pursuits, and, amidst the vicissitudes of fortune, he preserved an equal mind.

8. When Pericles, whose preceptor Anaxagoras had been, heard of the approach of the philosopher's death, he hastened to the spot where he tarried for his release, and implored the sage, in a late and unavailing grief, to struggle with his approaching fate, and to baffle the gathering death. "Oh, Pericles," said the old man, stung with the memory of long neglect, and in a feeble and dying voice, as he just lifted his face from his mantle, "those who need the lamp, do not forget to feed it with oil."

ANAXIMANDER.

1. Infinity is the attribute of the universe, which, though variable in every part, is immutable in its mode or natural order.

2. There are innumerable worlds, or terrestrial bodies, consisting alike of the same eternal elements—the genera of decaying and renovating animals, vegetables, minerals, and fluids, both fixed and ethereal.

3. His manner of reciting in his school being ridiculed, he observed, "I must endeavour to speak better for the sake of the boys."

ANAXIMENES.

Chiefly attentive to material causes, he taught the unity and infinity of the universal and eternal consistency.

ANTIOCHUS.

As all medicine refers to one end—health, so all philosophy to happiness alone.

ANTISTHENES.

1. Our own minds should be as a fortification of impregnable strength.
2. Wisdom is a defence that can neither be stormed nor surrendered.
3. Virtue may be acquired by study; or, virtue is the effect of instruction.
4. Those are noble who are virtuous.
5. Virtue is sufficient to felicity.
6. Virtue consists of a steady course of right conduct, and not in a vain ostentation of learning, or an idle display of eloquence.
7. The most necessary part of learning is to be taught to divest our minds of prejudice.
8. A wise man will always be contented with his condition, and will live rather according to the precepts of virtue than according to prevalent laws and customs.
9. It is better to associate oneself with a few honest men, against whom the vicious multitude are opposed, than to join the vicious, however numerous, against the good.
10. A good man converses with the wicked, as a physician with the sick—not to catch, but to cure, their disorders.
11. Speech is that which declares what is or was.
12. By means of philosophy, we learn to converse with ourselves.
13. Whoever feareth is a slave, whatever he may think of himself.
14. Observe what your enemies say, for they first declare your faults.
15. Whatever is good and useful is honourable; whatever is evil and pernicious is disgraceful.
16. A man of shining merit is more worthy of our regards than a mere relative.
17. All good men are brothers.
18. Feasts occasion surfeits.
19. We ought to aim at such pleasures as follow labour, and not at those which go before it.
20. Being told that a bad man had been praising him, he said, "What foolish thing can I have been doing?"

APULEIUS.

Individuals are mortal; their genera, immortal.

ARCESILAUS.

1. It is the peculiar advantage of philosophy to know the proper time for everything.
2. When we reprove young men, we should remember that we ourselves were once young.

ARCHELAUS.

The universe is unlimited.

ARCHYTAS.

Those who are well acquainted with universals will plainly see what are particulars.

ARISTARCHUS.

He held the opinions of Pythagoras as to the system of the world, or nature—teaching that the earth moves in an orbit round the sun, at the same time that it revolves about its own centre and axis: he taught also that the annual orbit of the earth, compared with the distances of the fixed stars, is but as a point; on account of which belief, though the persecution he suffered was not so severe as that of the more modern Galileo, yet he did not escape censure for his imputed impiety; for it is recorded that Cleanthus endeavoured to cause him to be brought to trial for his sentiments respecting the celestial bodies and the earth.

ATTICUS.

He was of the sect of Epicurus; and, though many have thought it impossible for one who denies a providence to equal in morality an acknowledger of the gods, yet Bayle defies any one to produce a person of greater integrity and humanity.

BION.

“ Bion, the Boristhenite,
By his birth to Scythia known,
Did religious worship slight,
Gods affirming there were none.”

1. Arrogance is the impediment to virtue; conceited folly is the obstruction to the gaining of knowledge.

2. Prudence as far exceeds the other virtues, as sight does the rest of the senses.

3. It is a great ill not to be able to bear ills.

4. He torments himself the most vainly, who pretends to seek happiness in the accumulation of a brilliant fortune.

5. Misers take as much care of their money as if it belonged to them, but make as little use of it as if it were the property of others.

6. Men of mind, though slaves, are free; but uninstructed men, though free, are slaves to their propensities.

7. No person's age should be a reproach, that being a condition at which all may arrive.

8. Being questioned, “ if there were any gods?”—“ Wilt thou not drive the crowd out of hearing while I answer thee?” was his reply to his interrogator.

9. He reproached those persecutors who burn men because they have sense.

10. To an envious man who appeared sad, he said, “ I know not whether some ill hath befallen thyself, or some good fortune hath happened to another.”

CARNEADES.

1. The rational use of life is the enjoyment of natural principles.
2. The same nature that put us together will dissolve us.
3. As the foundation of morals, he taught that the ultimate end of life is the enjoyment of those things towards which we are directed by the principles of nature.

CATO, *the Censor.*

1. Every one should learn some useful art, in order that he may be independent of the world.
2. The open animosity of hatred often injures us less than the apparent kindness of friendship.
3. Being scurrilously treated by a fellow who led a licentious and dissolute life—"A contest," said he, "between thee and me is very unequal; for thou canst hear ill language with ease, and return it with pleasure; but on my side, 'tis unusual for me to hear it, and disagreeable to speak it."

CATO, *of Utica.*

(*Ambassadors from Cæsar address him.*)

Ambassadors. "Noblest of Romans, we come to save
The pride of Rome from a timeless grave:
Hear the greeting which Cæsar sends—
'Cæsar counts Cato among his friends.'"

Cato. "Bear back to Cæsar Cato's reply—
'Cato's friends are the friends of liberty.'"

Am. "Cæsar offers thee power, high station, and sway;—
Power, that all, next to Cæsar himself, shall obey."

Cato. "No power of value to Cato can be,
Save the power of keeping his country free."

Am. "Cæsar offers thee wealth—riches we'll bring
That shall rival the stores of the Lydian King."

Cato. "Freedom is of a price too high
For all the wealth of Cræsus to buy."

Am. "Cæsar offers thee pleasure; the west and the east
Shall be traversed for beauty thy view to feast."

Cato. "No beauty can equal, in Cato's eye,
The loveliness of liberty."

Am. "A grander offer of favour we bring;
Some subject kingdom shall call thee king."

Cato. "In Cato's eyes, the freeman's grave
Is grander far than the throne of a slave."

Am. "Ask aught in the power of Cæsar to give:
There's nought he'll refuse if Cato will live."

Cato. "Go, bear this answer to Cæsar home—
'The boon Cato asks is—the Freedom of Rome.'"

CATULLUS.

In love, when once passion is gratified, promises and oaths go for naught.

CHRYSIPPUS.

1. We ought to live and think according to our experience of natural events.

2. Leave alone troubling aged persons about serious questions; propound them to such as are young.

3. He wished that, if it were possible, children should be nursed by none but intelligent women.

4. Being told that some persons spoke ill of him—"It is no matter," said he, "for I will live so as that they shall not be believed."

5. He is said to have taught doctrines entirely subversive of religion.

CLEANTHES.

1. We can but follow the common nature of all men.

2. He said, the reason ancient philosophers were superior to the moderns, was because the first studied things, whereas, now they minded nothing but words.

3. When old, he said he should always think life worth preserving, as long as he should be able to study and write.

4. He advised his pupils to conceive of pleasure as a deity sitting on her throne, attended by the virtues, who are ready, on every occasion, to whisper in her ear, "do nothing that will be the cause of pain or grief to yourself or others."

5. Being reproved for his timidity, he said, "It is to this quality that I am indebted for my innocence."

CORNELIUS NEPOS.

Each one forms his own particular idea of happiness.

CRATES.

1. To a niggard, who demanded what he should get by philosophy? he replied, "You will learn to draw your purse-strings easily, and give freely; not avoiding it, as you now do, by turning away and trembling, as if you had the palsy."

2. Of a recluse, who affected abstraction, he asked, "what occupied him?" and was answered, "I am speaking with myself." "Take care, then," rejoined he, "that you do not speak with a bad man."

CRITOLAUS.

He is said to have held the doctrine of the eternity of the world.

DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS.

Pride is to be condemned in prosperity; but there is a pride which is excusable in misfortune.

DEMONAX.

A public charge was brought against him for neglecting to become initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, and he pleaded that he had declined it, because, if the secrets were bad, he ought not to conceal them; and, if they were good, his duty to mankind would oblige him to disclose them.

DEMOSTHENES.

1. Our too great vivacity, and our irritability, stand in the way of our judging correctly.
2. We should consider calmly, but execute promptly.
3. Want of sincerity in our dealings and in performing our duties, is the grand cause of all our miscarriages.

DIAGORAS.

1. His name has been transmitted to his posterity as an avowed advocate for the rejection of all religious belief; and the general voice of antiquity has so strongly asserted his atheistical principles, that we cannot refuse him his due credit.

2. He rejected the whole doctrine of deity as evidently incompatible with the necessarily infinite and eternal conditions of the universe.

3. When he once saw a perjured person escape punishment, he publicly declared his disbelief of a divine providence; and from that time he not only spoke with ridicule of the gods and of all religious ceremonies, but even strove to expose the sacred mysteries of religion (or the contrivances of the priests for gulling the people with miraculous appearances) to the vulgar, and to dissuade men from submitting to the rites of initiation to piety. This brought upon him the persecutions of those in power, who offered a reward to whoever should kill him—and he became a fugitive in Attica.

4. Being at sea during a storm, the terrified sailors began to accuse themselves for having received on board their ship a man so infamous for his impiety; upon which, he pointed out to them other vessels in sight, which were in equal danger, asking them, "whether they thought that each of those ships also carried a Diagoras?"

DICEARCHUS.

He held that there is no such thing as soul in man or beast; that the principle by which animated beings perceive and act, is a faculty inseparable from the living body, and expires with its life or sanity; that the human race always existed; and that it is impossible to foretel future events, and the knowledge of them would be an infelicity.

DIOGENES, *the Babylonian.*

1. We should conform to the state and condition of life, choosing those things which are naturally eligible, and rejecting such as reason and experience instruct us are improper.

2. While he was delivering a discourse upon anger, a foolish youth, in order to raise a laugh against the philosopher, by making him angry, spit in his face; upon which Diogenes meekly and prudently said, "I am not angry, but I am in doubt whether I ought not to be so."

EMPEDOCLES.

1. Nature is the eternal and immutable condition or mode of existence.

2. He despised the crown offered to him, and recalled his fellow-citizens to a sense of the value of their liberty, of which they were losing sight; and he took a pride in maintaining equal rights throughout the community; and, although an aristocracy had gained ground, he succeeded in restoring the democratic constitution.

ENNIUS.

"Augurs and soothsayers, astrologers,
Divines, and interpreters of dreams,
Savers of souls,
I ne'er consult, and heartily despise:
Vain their pretence to more than human skill;
For gain, imaginary schemes they draw;
Wand'ers themselves, they guide another's step,
And for poor sixpence promise countless wealth.
Let them, if they expect to be believed,
Deduct the sixpence, and bestow the rest."

EPICHRMUS.

To be dead is no evil.

EUCLID, *Founder of the Megaric sect.*

1. Being asked what the gods were, and wherein they delighted—"Of all things else concerning them," said he, "I am ignorant; but this I know, that they hate inquisitive persons:"—an answer which, at that time, and remembering the fate of Socrates, showed his prudence at least.

2. To his brother, who in a quarrel had said, "Let me perish if I be not revenged on you"—he replied, "and let me perish if I subdue not your resentment by forbearance, and make you still love me as much as ever."

EUCLID, *the Mathematician.*

When King Ptolemy asked him whether there was any shorter method of acquiring a knowledge of geometry than by the study of his elements, he made answer, that "he knew of no royal way to arrive at the science."

EURIPIDES.

The most worthy man feels himself degraded, when he is forced to blush on account of the vices of his parent.

GREEK MAXIM.

To vary employment is to rest.

FLERILLUS, *the Carthaginian.*

Science is the end of life; which Suidas explains to mean, that the conduct of life ought always to be conformable to truth.

HERMOGENES.

A god could not make all things out of himself; because, himself being always unmade, he could then really be the maker of nothing.

HESIOD.

1. The potter is hostile to the potter.
2. It is indolence, and not industry, that is shameful.
3. That is indeed the superior intellect which hath discovered knowledge by means of its own genius; though the mind that has been capable of benefitting by the instruction of others, hath also its merit: but he is the worthless man who has neither learnt anything by the exertion of his own faculties, nor sought the assistance of others.

“Fools! not to know that half exceeds the whole;
How blest the sparing meal and temperate bowl:
Fools! not to know how far an humble lot
Exceeds abundance, by injustice got;
How health and virtue bless the rustic swain,
While luxury destroys the pamper'd train.”

HIGESIAS.

Perfect felicity is absolutely impossible, because the body is often disordered, and the mind thereby affected; also most of those things which we hope for are prevented by accident.

HIPPIAS.

Virtue consists in not wanting the assistance of men.

HIPPO.

“No single thing is free from decay:” on account of this opinion he has been ranked among atheists.

HIPPOCRATES.

1. By the necessary mode of nature the elements are resolvable into each other; and all things are subject to a perpetually changing and reciprocal commixture.
2. Instruction is to the human intellect what cultivation is to the soil.
3. Instead of adopting his theory of medicine from any received system or hypothesis, he rather chose to raise it upon the foundation of the most accurate knowledge he was able to attain of the structure of the human body, and the nature of diseases.

HORACE.

1. We should be entirely bent upon the just observance of what is true and becoming.

"What right, what true, what fit, we justly call,
Let this be all my care, for this is all."

"Whatever contradicts my sense,
I hate to hear, and never can believe."

2. The world is an eternal movement.

"It rolls and rolls, and will for ever roll."

3. Years, in their rapid flight, are ever robbing us of some portion of ourselves.

"Thy lengthen'd hopes with prudence bound,
Proportion'd to the flying hour;
While thus we talk in careless ease,
The envious moments wing their flight:
Instant the fleeting pleasure seize,
Nor trust to-morrow's doubtful light."

"Life's span forbids us to extend our cares,
And stretch our hopes beyond our years."

4. Ridicule is the surer weapon with which we may convince him who obtusely and pertinaciously adheres to erroneous opinions, in spite of reason: ridicule corrects better than reprehension.

"Oft will the edge of ridicule succeed
To cut the knot where graver reas'ning fails."

"From cheats of words, the crowd she brings
To real estimates of things."

5. If we manifest contempt toward the amusements of the world, the world in return will pay but little regard to our precepts.

"'Tis wise at times to trifle."

6. Envy instigates men to hate those who possess superior genius, while they are living, and after their death it is customary to affect regret for their loss.

"To shun detraction, wouldst thou virtue fly?"

"False praise can please, and calumny affright,
None but the vicious and the hypocrite,"

"Though ten times worse themselves, you'll frequent view
Those who with keenest rage will censure you."

"The man resolved, and steady to his trust,
Inflexible to ill, and obstinately just,
May the rude rabble's insolence despise—
Their senseless clamour, and tumultuous cries.
The tyrant's fierceness he beguiles,
And the stern brow, and the harsh voice defies;
And with superior greatness smiles."

"True happiness is to no spot confin'd:
If you preserve a firm and equal mind,
'Tis here, 'tis there, and everywhere."

"Content, that courts nor wealth nor power,
Nor fears, nor seeks, the dying hour."

7. To a man of sensibility, there is no pleasure comparable to that of possessing a true friend.

“ The greatest blessing is a pleasant friend.”

8. Our grief is more effectually dissipated by reason and reflection, than by resorting to a solitary shore, where we can stretch our view over a vast expanse of water.

9. Power, unless it be regulated by prudence, soon occasions its own downfall.

JULIAN.

1. He who derives knowledge from habit, and who has not acquired its principles, may be compared to an empiric, who, by practice, may cure one or two diseases with which he is familiar, but being unacquainted with system, theory, and art, must necessarily be ignorant of the innumerable complaints which have not fallen under his personal observation.

2. We ought to correct the ignorant rather than punish them; to pity, and not hate them; to have as few wants, and to do as much good, as possible.

JUVENAL

1. Such is the cause of hatred amongst nations! Each man detests the religion which is not adopted in his own country, and each believes the god feigned by himself to be the only true object of worship.

“ Religious spite and pious spleen, bred first
The quarrel which so long the bigots nurst;
Each calls the other's God a senseless stock—
His own, divine.”

—————“ Hence ruthless rancour springs;
Each hates his neighbour's gods, and each believes
The power alone divine which he adores.”

2. The prudent need not call upon any god for assistance.

“ Whoe'er takes prudence for his guard and guide,
Engages every guardian beside.”

3. Persons of exalted rank generally possess weak judgments.

“ Want is the scorn of every wealthy fool,
And wit in rags is turn'd to ridicule.”

“ Convince the world that you're correct and true,
Be just in all you say, in all you do;
Whatever be your birth, you're sure to be
A man of the first quality to me.”

4. The strongest frailty of a feeble mind is revenge.

5. “ No man e'er reach'd the heights of vice at first.”

6. “ Nothing so monstrous can be said or feign'd,
But with belief and joy is entertain'd;

When to her face a giddy girl is prais'd,
By ill-judg'd flatt'ry to an angel rais'd."

7. " Good taste and nature always speak the same."

MYSON.

We must not seek things for words, but words for things; or, things are not made for words, but words for things.

OCELLUS.

Since there can be nothing exterior to the universe, it is impossible that any matter which now exists should ever have been produced from, or should be ever reduced to, nothing; individual substances and forms are, however, of limited duration, being subject to birth, increase, and decay, in generic progression: thus a perpetual circuit of nature is maintained;—the variable world has eternally exhibited a revolving succession of changes. The race of man, as well as the races of all existences, is uncommenced and unending.

OVID.

" Similar, not the same."

" E'en times are in perpetual flux, and run
Like rivers from their fountains rolling on;
For time, no more than streams, is at a stay;
The flying hour is ever on its way;
And, as the fountains still supply their store,
The wave behind impels the wave before;
Thus, in successive course, the minutes run,
And urge their predecessor minutes on;
Still moving, ever new; for former things
Are laid aside, like abdicated kings;
And every moment alters what is done,
And innovates some art till then unknown."

1. A man's own bosom is the primary judge of his actions; for, according to the decision of his conscience, he is either happy or miserable.

" Ingenuous arts, where they an entrance find,
Softens the manners, and subdues the mind."

2. Our desires are excited by that which is prohibited, and that which is permitted loses its attraction.

3. An ailing spirit cannot bear the least contradiction.

4. The mind that is conscious of rectitude laughs at calumny.

5. Even an adversary may do us some service.

6. There is no authority can justify perfidy towards a friend: fickleness in friendship is inexcusable.

7. A slight effort is sufficient to overthrow the edifice that is already tottering.

PANÆTIUS.

1. We should yield to the force of natural impressions.

2. His opinion on the question of the immortality of the soul—a

doctrine which he rejected--was: "Whatsoever beginneth, endeth: whatsoever is subject to disease, is subject, likewise, to death: the mind is subject to pain, and the intellect decays; therefore, it is subject to death, and the doctrine of its immortality is false: souls exist not in fact."

3. He treated miracles, prophecies, and supernatural notions of every kind, with entire contempt.

PARMENIDES.

1. The universe alone really exists.

2. The material of no substance in nature is either produced or destroyed; but merely appear so to the uninstructed senses of the ignorant and inexperienced vulgar.

3. The senses take cognizance of natural objects; reason considers the abstract nature of things, and inquires into the constitution, or rather, condition of the universe.

PAUSANIUS, *Son of Cleombrutus.*

The qualities of worth possessed in our own minds are more desirable than a property in worldly substance of great amount.

PERICLES.

Praise, beyond a certain point, is sure to offend.

PERSIUS.

Thy knowledge is nothing, unless thou canst impart it to others.

"Science is not science till reveal'd."

"None scrutinize themselves."

PETRONIUS, *Arbiter.*

The benefit derived from the physician's visit, often consists in nothing more than the satisfaction yielded to the trusting mind.

PHÆDRIUS.

[His fables being put into the hands of youth at school, the morals need not, therefore, appear in this collection.]

PHERECYDES.

1. Duration is eternal.

2. He said that, if he should never sacrifice to any god, he should lead a life no less safe and pleasant than that of those who offered hecatombs.

3. As to the story of his having been gradually consumed for his impiety by the lousy disease, it must doubtless be set down to the long list of malicious lies, by which priestcraft and superstition have always endeavoured to bring philosophy into contempt.

PHILIPPIDES.

When Lysimachus asked him what he should impart to him, he replied, "anything but your secrets."

PHOCION.

"If my children resemble myself," said he, "my small farm in the country will maintain them, as it has sufficed for my own support; and, if not, I would not desire to encourage their dissipation at the expense of the republic."

PINDAR.

Those only are disposed for war, by whom its evils have never been experienced."

PLAUTUS.

1. Men, in their conduct towards their fellow-men, are like wolves.

2. A man's elevation may be entirely owing to his good fortune, and yet all the world will cry up his talents.

3. A woman's best dowry is, her virtue, modesty, and restrained desires.

PLINY.

1. "I consider the belief of deity must be attributed to human weakness. It is satisfactory to know that possibilities are limited to nature. A god could not inflict on himself death, even if he should wish to die; he could not prevent the death of man, nor raise him from the dead; he could have no power over the past; he could not prevent twice ten from being twenty, &c. &c.: from which it is clearly apparent that the powers of nature are all."

2. "As in a man's life, so in his studies, I think it the most admirable and graceful thing in the world, so to mingle gravity with humour, as that the one shall not sink into melancholy, nor the other mount up into levity."

3. No one has a genius so bright as to become illustrious instantaneously, unless it fortunately meets with opportunity and encouragement;—with patronage too, and commendation.

4. Human nature is fond of novelty.

5. We follow example much more readily than we obey command.

6. Man's arrogance goes great lengths, since the slightest success elevates him.

7. Mortals find satiety in their own possessions, and covet those of others.

8. To a mind distracted with terror, every suggestion of others seems more prudent than its own.

PLOTINUS.

Should any one interrogate Nature how she works, she will say, "It behoves thee to go along with me in silence, even as I am silent, and work without words."

POLYBIUS.

When we are contented with that which is necessary for life, we have no need of other philosophy or other guides.

POSYDONIUS.

1. We should contemplate truth in following nature, and should make the eternal conditions and immutable mode of the universe the rule of our actions.

2. Nothing is good which is not true.

PROPERTIUS.

1. It is our own misconduct which generally occasions the misery of our condition.

2. There are no antipathies so violent as those which ensue love.

PROTAGORAS.

1. "Of the gods I know nothing."

2. Man's senses are the criterion of things that are.

3. The soul is nothing more than the senses.

4. Science is sense.

5. Be not too concise in your communications, lest you be not understood; nor too diffuse, lest you be wearisome.

6. The doctrines he taught brought on him the displeasure of the powerful, as being judged favourable to impiety, and his writings were ordered to be diligently collected and burnt in the market-place by the common crier: he himself was banished from Attica.

PUBLIUS SYRIUS.

1. He who is capable of calculating consequences, will not undertake to act without the certainty of success.

2. An intemperate patient needs a rigorous physician.

3. The misfortunes of others should teach us prudence.

PYRRHO.

1. Just like the race of plants is that of man; a man has no more immortality than a stick.

2. Everything is thought and done by habit; every thing is determined with reference to the laws and customs of particular countries.

QUINTILLIAN.

1. We ought, at first, to be more anxious in regard to our conceptions than our expressions: we may attend to the latter afterwards.

2. Do not speak in such a manner as that your hearers may understand you, if they please; but so as that they shall understand you, whether they will or no.

3. Good sense without education, is better than education without good sense.

4. It is rare that we respect ourselves sufficiently to prevent our exposing ourselves.

5. It can scarcely be described how readily we are influenced by the example of those whom we regard.

SALLUST.

1. Wars have ever been occasioned by this sole cause—the thirst of domination and aggrandizement: sovereign power is held as the greatest glory.

2. A haughty and insolent spirit is the common vice of the aristocracy.

SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS.

An occasional conformity with the frivolities of others, is better than wearing eternally the countenance of a cynic.

SIMON, *a disciple of Socrates.*

So much value did this philosopher set upon freedom of inquiry, that when Pericles invited him to reside in his house, under the promise of an ample recompense, he refused; saying, that he would not sell the liberty of speaking his mind at any price.

SIMONIDES.

When Hiero propounded to him the question, “What is god, or what is his essence?” he desired a day to consider of it. When his answer was required next day, Simonides begged two days more; and afterwards when, instead of giving his opinion, he continually desired double the time for considering the subject, and Hiero asked him what he meant by so doing—“Because,” said he, “the longer I meditate on the question, the more obscure it appears to me.”

“Of earthly goods, the best is a good wife;
A bad, the bitterest curse of human life.”

STILPO.

1. The highest felicity, or chief good, consists in freeing our minds from the dominion of passion.

2. Being questioned by Crates, whether the gods delighted in bent knees and in prayers—“Thou fool,” replied he, “do not put such a question to me in the public hearing, but when we shall be alone.”

3. At the taking of Megara, when Demetrius asked him “if he had lost anything by the capture?”—“No,” answered he, “for war can neither rob us of virtue, nor of learning, nor of eloquence: my property is safe, for it consists in my mind.”

STOBÆUS.

1. The supreme good is to live according to a just conception of the real nature of things

2. Our youth should be occupied in acquiring information ; our manhood should be employed in useful exertion ; and, in old age, we should be exempt from labour, and live at our ease and discretion, without being liable to the discharging of any official duties.

STRABO.

It was not possible to lead a promiscuous multitude into religious trammels by philosophical lectures, and by instructions in the art of reasoning justly : this could only be effected by the aid of superstition, delusion, and fear—by prodigies and fables : the thunderbolt, the sword, the torch, were the instruments made use of by the founders of states to terrify the ignorant vulgar into religious subjection.

STRATO.

1. The mode or action of nature exists without intelligence ; and the faculties of natural bodies being eternal, they consequently can never have been created or caused by an originator. The world has neither been formed by the agency of a feigned deity, nor by an intelligent animating principle. The mind only acts by means of the organs of sense and the animal functions.

2. He boldly gainsayed the doctrines of divinity and the immortality of the soul ; he was of opinion that the property of motion, or the natural production and dissolution of bodies, acts without intelligence, and is the necessarily eternal condition ; that matter, with its forms, is the eternal mode of the universe ; and that the mind only exists as an accident of the senses.

3. In excluding all idea of creation, or original formation from the world, it cannot be doubted that he indirectly excluded from his system the doctrine of the existence of a supreme being.

SUIDAS (*Paraphrase from*).

“ Happiness is found within.”

“ How various the pursuits, the hopes, the fears,
The passions, wishes, tastes, and views of man !
His object one ; for happiness appears
To be the aim and end of every plan.
One grasps at wealth, and gains the glittering prize,
Which to vile rubbish turns beneath his eyes ;
One sighs for power till tortur'd by its pangs ;
One follows fame, and finds it but a vapour :
Love proves a noose in which a wretch oft hangs ;
And time melts friendship like a wasted taper.
Then since experience shows us how we blunder,—
That wealth is dust, and reputation breath ;
That love and friendship are soon snapt asunder,
And mad ambition's paths betray to death :—
Why not forsake our errors, and begin
To learn that—‘ happiness is found within.’ ”

ANON.

SYRIAN PHILOSOPHER.

Good reason had he who affirmed that some means were necessary to existence, and that without them a man can succeed in nothing.

“ If you are destitute of food and raiment, you sink into misery, and become a beggar from others ; then your abjectness increases, and even your natural ability and rational powers forsake you. And this is not all ; the qualities which are applauded in the affluent are scorned in the needy. Is the poor man brave ?—he is fool-hardy ; is he generous ?—he passes for a prodigal ; has he humour ?—he is but a sorry ape ; is he better informed than other men ?—he will be considered as the most irrational ; does he speak eloquently ?—he is a babbler ; is he given to silence ?—he is a fool.

THE TALMUD.

Should simplicity be opposed to cunning, and openness of heart to deep duplicity—as well might we oppose the lamb to the fox, or the trembling fawn to the crouching tiger. No ; let snares be set for the deceiver, and let the deviser of fraud fall into his own pit ; so shall honesty trample over baseness, and wisdom show herself stronger than guile.

TERENCE.

1. No man was ever so completely skilled in the conduct of life as not to derive new information from age and experience ; insomuch that we, in time, find ourselves really ignorant of what we thought we understood, and, at last, see cause to reject what we had fancied our truest interest.

2. How much that is unjust and erroneous is authorized by custom !

3. From the biographies of other men we should derive examples for our own government.

4. It is highly desirable not to be addicted to any one thing over-much.

5. It is well to be able to bend when occasion shall render it advisable.

6. It is truly paternal to adopt an open manner of dealing with children, and to accustom them to act rightly from a proper judgment and a due sense of shame, rather than from external fear.

7. It is a strange delusion to think that authority can better be established by force than by affection.

8. Being men, nothing pertaining to humanity should be beneath our consideration.

9. The capricious state of love is usually attended with affronts, suspicions, quarrels, and reconciliations.

10. When the mind is hung in suspense the merest trifle produces its determination.

THEANO.

Unless a man be entirely depraved, he persists not in a lasting connexion with an infamous woman.

THEMISTOCLES.

When acting in the office of judge, he was solicited by Simonides

to make some stretch of power in his behalf, when he replied—"As you would not be a good poet if you transgressed against the laws of numbers, so neither should I be a good judge if I held the gratification of a friend more sacred than the laws."

THEODORUS.

1. Our chief good and ill are joy and sorrow ; one consisting in prudence, and the other in imprudence.

2. The world is our country.

3. On account of the freedom with which he spoke concerning the gods, maintaining those who were esteemed such to have been only men who had possessed great power on earth, he was charged with impiety ; and, it is related that, like Socrates, he suffered death by hemlock.

THEOPOMPUS.

Time annuls prostituted honours, but it augments those which have been sparingly accorded to real merit.

TIBULLUS.

Be thyself thy world, even amidst the desert.

VIRGIL.

"Happy the man ! alone thrice happy he,
Whose courage from the deeps of knowledge springs,
Nor vainly fears inevitable things."

1. The bent of our minds is ever varying ; certain impressions are experienced when the sky is overcast, and certain others when the atmosphere is pure and serene.

2. All know what silly furies some women become when their will is thwarted.

XENOCRATES.

1. True philosophers are the only persons who do willingly, and by their own choice, what others are constrained to do by fear of blame or the laws.

2. We often repent of having spoken, but seldom of having kept silence.

3. Too great pains cannot be taken to defend and preserve children from hearing vicious discourse.

XENOPHANES.

—————"I have with care essayed
Every opinion, search'd all theories :
All into one resolve, and that one ever,
Drawn into one like nature, doth persevere."

1. The infinite universe cannot have emanated from nothing ; something must necessarily have existed eternally, or that which exists must have been produced by nothing : if ever there could have been a time when nothing existed, then there could never have been any such thing as existence.

2. The universal state of being has not been derived from any prior principle: nature is one, eternal and without limit. The infinity of the universe is a positive demonstration of the non-existence of deity; it entirely silences all question upon that point.

3. That which is one alone, is consequently fixed and unalterable; for if it could change in situation, it could not be infinite, but contained in an infinity; and if it could undergo change of nature, something then would become existing which could cause this alteration, and which had not existed previously; that which is, would cease to be; and that which was nothing would become something.

4. That which is unique, is perfectly homogeneous, that is to say, alike universally.

5. The one infinite, eternal, and homogeneous universe, or world of nature, can alone possess the attribute of immutability: individual objects alone change, but the generic chain of modification is permanent and unalterable.

6. In nature there is no origin either of mode or material; there is no real production or annihilation: there is no such thing as passing from non-entity to entity, or the reverse.

7. Habitable and inhabited masses, or, conglomerations of mineral, vegetable, and animal substances, pervade the universe: there are innumerable planetary systems.

XENOPHON.

1. The science which is most necessary for us to learn, is how to preserve ourselves from the contagion of bad example.

2. Ridiculous fables are taught by the supercilious and pedantic professors of the colleges.

3. Death is neither good nor evil, but the end of life.

ZENO, *Founder of the Stoic Sect.*

1. Universal matter is necessarily eternal, not admitting of increase nor decrease: there is no real existence which is not corporeal.

2. The parts or forms, tend toward a dissolution, but the infinity remains immutably the same.

3. The world, or universe, is a sempiternal and indeclinable series and chain of existence, implicating itself by eternal order—of consequence, necessarily adapted and connected.

4. The doctrine of fate, or necessity, implies the eternal and immutable series of causes and effects, within which all events are included.

5. The end of life, to be pursued for its own sake, is to enjoy it agreeably to the natural conditions of the world: it behoves a man to conform all his desires and pursuits to the general arrangement of nature.

6. The wisest are not wise in every respect, and the most learned are often ignorant of the commonest subjects.

7. A brilliant discourse may not always have the effect of exciting

the applauses of a numerous audience; their faculties may be so forcibly arrested, as to deprive them of the power to clap their hands.

8. Logic may be compared to the clenched fist, and rhetoric to the open hand.

9. It is less dangerous to slip with the foot than with the tongue.

10. Right is not placed in might, but might in right.

11. Nothing is more unseemly than pride, especially in a young man.

12. Having detected his servant in theft, the fellow said—"It was his destiny to steal,"—"And to be beaten," added Zeno, suiting the action to the word.

ZENO, of Elea.

1. There exists no vacuum in nature.

2. If we are indifferent to praise, we shall be also insensible to censure.

ZENO, of Tarsus.

He withheld his assent to the doctrine of final conflagration.

SENTIMENTS, CORRECTLY TO APPROPRIATE WHICH HAS ESCAPED
THE AUTHOR'S RECOLLECTION.

1. The first and noblest office of wisdom, is to examine ourselves, and regulate our sentiments and actions by the laws of nature and morals.

2. We should never be afraid of expressing those sentiments which our experience has proved to be true.

3. There is no disgrace in avowing our ignorance of any particular science, but it is a great misfortune to remain ignorant of nature; and not to know that every real science is in nature, and that all its productions, or rather generations, are eternal.

4. It is not easy to explain how one metaphysical being could so modify itself as to produce other metaphysical beings.

5. If it be asked, where we are to go to after death, the answer is, "We shall go where those are who are not yet born."

6. The cause of our being insensible to that which is vicious is our still being plunged in vice.

7. To be sensible that we have been dreaming, it is necessary for us to be awake.

8. It is good to soften, by pleasing recreations, the rigid expression of countenance which a severity of reflection has a tendency to produce.

9. The agreeable sensation which we feel while in action causes the fatigue of labour itself to be disregarded.

10. No two things differ more than hurry and despatch.

11. We should consider those who serve us as unfortunate friends.

12. Constancy of mind gives a man reputation, and makes him happy in spite of all misfortunes.

13. That man only is truly brave who fears nothing so much as

doing a shameful action; and that dares resolutely and undauntedly go where his duty, how dangerous soever it is, may call him.

14. Courage without conduct is like fancy without judgment; all sail, and no ballast.

15. Every wise man, especially in authority and command, ought to regard justice, probity, and the faith of engagements, as the most precious treasure he can possess; and as an assured resource, and an infallible support in all the events that can happen.

16. Flattery is a sort of bad money to which our vanity gives currency.

17. Misers mistake gold for their good; whereas 'tis only a means of attaining it.

18. The sure way to be cheated is to fancy ourselves more cunning than others.

19. A fool has not stuff enough to make a good man.

20. When our hatred is too violent it sinks us beneath those we hate.

21. Good sense should be the test of all rules, both ancient and modern; whatever is incompatible therewith is false.

22. Our enemies come nearer the truth in their judgment of us, than we do ourselves.

23. Man's chief wisdom consists in knowing his follies, and correcting them.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.



BIBLE OF REASON:

OR,

SCRIPTURES OF MODERN AUTHORS.

PART II.

COLLECTED AND RENDERED BY
B. F. POWELL.

" 'Tis liberty alone that gives the flow'r
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume—
And we are weeds without it."

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1837.

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THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES
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BIBLE OF REASON.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE UNIVERSE: ITS INFINITY AND ETERNITY—NATURE PREVAILS THROUGHOUT—PERPETUAL ORDERS OF EXISTENCE—FOLLY OF BELIEF IN CREATION, BEGINNING, OR END OF THE NECESSARY MODE OF BEING—GENERATION, GROWTH, MATURITY, DECAY, AND DEATH OF INDIVIDUALS—GEOLOGY—COSMOGONY—ASTRONOMY—REFLECTIONS.

1. Where is the intellect that has soared beyond the narrow circle of objects and views prescribed by the accustomed use of the senses, and the circumscribed rules of ignorant and artificial institutions, and has ranged through and contemplated the infinite expanse, or medium, to which the utmost extent comprehended by the imagination is but finite, bears no proportion, and is as nothing? What mind is there which has attained that utmost reach of knowledge, the science of the universe, so as to perceive that there exists not its comprehender?

2. The eternity of the human species, of worlds, suns, planets, and the brilliant scenes of the infinite and magnificent universe, a subject inexpressibly important and extensive in its nature, is more nearly interesting to every denomination of men than any thing that can possibly be the object of disquisition. At a period when a liberality of sentiment seems to be gaining ground—when men, emerging from the mists of ignorance, relinquish the errors and prejudices of their ancestors, something descriptive of the disposition of that stupendous existence, of which we form a necessary part, seems wanting to give still greater force and consistence to the reasonings of mankind.

3. The world, the universe, the infinity, has no beginning in time, and no bounds in space; it has no comprehender, much less Creator; there is no vestige of a beginning, and no prospect of an end.

4. The infinite orders of existence are involved in one eternal Nature.

5. The thing that hath been is that also which will be.

6. Who shall limit that which is unlimited?

7. The world contains in itself the seeds of its own eternity. It is far less difficult to conceive of its eternal continuance than of its final cessation.

8. There never has been any absence, and there never will be any cessation, of natural existence.

9. There is an absurdity in denying the coëval existence of matter, motion, and form, with an infinity of space and an eternity of time.

10. There is not more or less matter in the universe than at the period of the reputed creation ; and if any of the bodies of the solar system were to gain or lose, their gravities and motions would be affected, and their economies changed.

11. Astronomy has annihilated the heavens, by teaching us that the immensity of space is occupied by planetary spheres similar in order to our own.

12. What is a first, a second, or a third heaven ? What is there but the medium in which worlds make their revolutions ?

13. That which is called the sky is but the portion of space in which other solar and planetary systems, the nearest to our own, have their location.

14. It is not possible but that every globe must be in the midst of other globes ; and, consequently, there can be no extreme globes.

15. Pascal defined the universe—" Centre everywhere ; circumference nowhere."

16. If the universe were limited, it could not be, whatever were its extent, more than a material point environed by a vacant and infinite space ; a single moment would suffice for its being disseminated in eternal dissolution.

17. Infinity is as necessary a concomitant of the order of existence, as that order for infinity ; and without infinity the action of the universe could not exist.

18. If the general quantity of matter were not fixed—if successive creations of matter could take place, or if portions of matter could be annihilated—everything would be unstable and without order.

19. Descartes said—" There never takes place in the universe but the same amount of motion ; and, in fact, if this general amount were not fixed and unalterable—if it could be increased or diminished—there could be no equilibrium or order in the universe.

20. Credulity proceeds from inexperience. By consulting experience and contemplating the universe, we shall only find in it matter and motion.

21. Motion is Nature. Action is essential to matter. All beings but come into existence, act, increase, diminish, and ultimately are decomposed. Metals, minerals, &c. are all in action.

22. In the universe all is effect—all is cause.

23. The eternal generations of the infinite orders of existence constitute the perpetuity.

24. Rousseau thought that no one would dare to say—" Here is the limit which man may reach, but which he will never be able to pass." This limit may be defined to be attained in the knowledge that the universal order of being is the same as that order discoverable to our senses ; and that, to regard the sphere within the range

of our perceptions is to be acquainted with the same as all that exists.

25. Nature, in a comprehensive sense, is the infinite assemblage of whatever exists in the universe—all substances, with all their peculiar modes and relations, intrinsic or incidental, as operating irresistibly in a regular course of causation issuing from their unchangeable essences or properties. Substance and accident, in all their diversity—this is Nature. There is all one kind, and this is the only correct way in which the term “all” can ever be applied to the universe.

26. Compound bodies, or natural orders, occur everywhere; they form the mass of our earth, and that of all the beings which are on its surface; they form, also, the infinite existence of other globes.

27. Nature, whose essence is visibly to act and produce, requires not, to discharge its functions, an invisible mover.

28. The diversity of motion, or modes of motion, constitute alone the diversity of matter.

29. The laws of Nature are only the necessary connection of certain effects with their causes.

30. The world has always been; its existence is necessary.

31. The universe is not an effect; it is not a work; it has not been made, because it is impossible that what is infinite and eternal should have been made.

32. All particular shapes of matter are limited in their duration, but the genera of which they consist never can perish.

33. The finite is for all forms that exist actually at any time present; the infinite for that eternal succession of those forms that constitute eternal nature.

34. The slow but unremitting action of nature metamorphoses everything after a certain lapse of time, though its immediate agency excites no attention.

35. Time without an end, and space without a limit, are two things which no being, of course, can possibly comprehend.

36. So simplified are the properties by which the great laboratory of nature is actuated, that the same eternal principle, under its different forms or motions, constitutes the sum total of the infinite universe of things: not one single substance in the universe is either permanent or primary. Water and air are combinations, like every thing else. Combustion is but a mode of decomposition, by which substances the most solid become combined with those which have the least solidity; and these again are assumed by growing conformations of animal, vegetable, and mineral orders.

37. Infinite matter, considered in itself, is homogeneous: one element, as one principle, alone forms the universe.

38. Let us not be told that we attribute everything to blind causes, and to a fortuitous combination of atoms. Unskilful materialists have fallen into gross absurdities, by mistaking for real and distinct substances the different properties of extension, separately considered by mathematicians. Hence they formed the world of atoms, or small

bodies, without either bulk or extension, yet possessing infinite hardness, eternal consistency, and a great variety of forms. Bodies such as those can only exist in the minds of atomists.

39. Fruitless is the search for a modification of existence permanent and immutable. The elements of nature are the infinite orders of perpetual modes of existence.

40. The universe consists of the aggregate of beings and their relations. These beings, as well as their relations, succeed each other and are renewed without ceasing. Thus existence is the process of an action present at all times, in every part of space; an action perpetual and universal. It is by movement that material beings exist; by movement the nature and relations of these beings are in incessant change, and by movement these beings are decomposed and pass out of present forms: every substance composing every being is involved in incessant movement.

41. The things of this earth pass, and so do those of all other earths. Infinity consists of a nature similar to that displayed to our own senses. The same existence of every kind prevails throughout.

42. If science cannot explain every thing, it can assure us, at any rate, of the unity of the universal mode; and it demonstrates the impossibility of anything existing but that which accords with the general mode.

43. In the aggregate of the universe, there necessarily occurs the same amount of composition as of decomposition: the reparation is always equal to the dilapidation.

44. Infinite animated beings exult in their existence but for a day; their constituent energies are spent; they droop, and the mode of that existence is changed, and animal consciousness ceases.

45. One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever.

46. This earth, which we consider the first of globes, because we have the vanity to identify our own imagined consequence with every thing, is itself but an inconsiderable point in the universe. Could we transport ourselves to any other globe, we should perceive, within the range of our observation, as many globes as we count from hence; and were we still removed in any line to the farthest of those globes in view, we should only find before us the infinite! the infinite!

“ ————— Infinity within,
Infinity without, belie creation.”

47. The time that must be allowed for the production of the grand phenomena of Nature—effects of such magnitude—by causes evidently so slow in their operation, is, indeed, immense. The periods which, to our narrow apprehension, and compared with our ephemeral existence, appear of incalculable duration, are, in all probability, but trifles in the calendar of Nature. Every step we take in geological pursuits forces us to make almost unlimited drafts on antiquity. The leading idea which is present in all our researches,

and which accompanies every fresh observation—the sound which, to the ear of the student of Nature, seems continually echoed from every part of its works, is—Time! time! time!

48. In an age of superstitious barbarism, men are taught, from their infancy, to believe that Nature is but in the very dawn of its existence, and that a few thousand years are the utmost extent of its duration. No sooner are they informed that the human species are natural to the system of things, and that the infinite universe is of eternal existence, than instantly they revolt at an idea so contrary to that with which they had seriously been impressed; and, placing confidence in the dreams of their ignorant predecessors, they are insensible to the voice of reason and the simplest operations of Nature. Reason and reflection would convince mankind that millions of years are but as moments in duration; that the events which are daily obvious are but the ordinary incidents that ever have happened and ever will happen; the clear and simple inferences that might have been induced have been lost amid the dreams of superstition.

49. Descending to the minutest circumstances, the book of superstition pretends to fix with certainty the extraordinary period that gave birth to the universe, to the human race, the stars, and those innumerable worlds and beings that form the infinite objects of existence. With gravity it describes to us when Nature first was animated, and, still more circumstantially, the very spot is pointed out appropriated to the origin of mankind. Men are also taught prophetically to dream about the dissolution of the existence of Nature.

50. The arts and sciences, the records and traditions of mankind, do but temporally preserve the fleeting actions of men, and make them, as it were, for a moment, survive themselves. As to the innumerable ages, the multiplied successions of the unrecorded part of the human species, they emerge not from their oblivion.

51. Mankind, in the torrent of time that carries off, absorbs and reproduces not only animated existences, but every object and species of substance presented to our inspection, have ever fluctuated in their population, civilization, and refinement; and the arts may not only at times have been confined to some minute corner of the world, but even have been absolutely lost to the existing nations; infinite subversions and renewals of the lights of science may have occurred; in the ever-flowing succession of ages, philosophy, science, arts, and letters may have declined, and again necessarily and gradually originated and diffused themselves.

52. The literary advances of the present day may fade, from incidents totally unforeseen, by events which, from the nature and constitution of things, unavoidably take place in the world, and of whose former recurrences the existing records and experience can furnish us with no example.

53. The existing records and traditions, high as they may seem, to some, to originate, are but of the most limited extent, and give

little or no insight into the history of mankind, or the ages that have passed away.

54. The great revolutions of the globe, the transmutation of its most durable substances, the slow and alternate formation and dissolution of the immeasurable objects of existence—the sea's perpetual change of station, its depredations on the islands and continents, and its gradual retreat from the districts it previously occupied—these are facts but partially admitted to be experienced by men in their longest preserved records.

55. Such is the slowness of the innovating progress of Nature, that millions of years must elapse before a visible change in the geography of the globe takes place. We know, from geographical and historical records, that the present surface of the earth is nearly what it was four thousand years ago.

56. What is the proportion of a few thousand years, or even a more multiplied series of ages, compared with the endless succession of eternal existence, the unlimited revolution of events?

57. How few are there who, in the effort to comprehend the import of the words everlasting, eternity, perceive the longest chronicle of years and ages they ever heard or thought of to be nothing but a comparatively few revolutions of a little ball on which they are stuck, rolling amid myriads of other little balls, spread away in every direction, without any limits, because the space they occupy is boundless, and countless, because their numbers are innumerable!

58. How few are there who perceive the greatest length of time they can conceive is but as a moment to that duration which never has had a beginning, and never will have an end!

59. Haller, speaking of eternity, said—"Thought, in its rapid flight, swifter far than the wind, than sound, than time—swifter far than the rays of light, in vain fatigues itself in ranging through thy periods, and despairs of ever arriving at any term!" This sublime picture, which seems to describe the measure that is least imperfect when applied to infinity itself, presents us with a key to all the reveries that human kind have ever conceived about death.

60. Numerous renewed surfaces of the earth, one successively covering the other, each deposition requiring the action of series of ages, altogether inconceivable, to complete; vestiges of human industry discovered beneath the accumulated masses or beds,* occa-

* The first bed that presents itself in the district of Darby Moor, in Derbyshire, England, is that of a coarse sandy kind of stone, which extends to the depth of 120 yards; and which, from the attrition of its particles, rounded as stones upon the sea beach, and like most other sandy compositions, produced from various substances, would seem to have been formed by the action either of rivers or of the ocean. This is succeeded by a black clayey composition, indurated and petrified by time, equally deep as the former. Then comes a body of limestone, the depth of fifty yards; and the remains of petrified crocodiles have been here discovered. Next succeeds a matter of black stone or marble, resembling lava, the depth of 16 yards. Another bed of limestone, the depth of 50 yards, is again incumbent upon black stone or lava, the depth of 46 yards. This is again succeeded by limestone, the depth of 60 yards. Once more succeeds the same black

sioned by the advances and retreats of the ocean repeated in a multiplied succession; vast remains of land and sea animals and vegetables, in the deepest recesses of the earth and the remotest regions; truths founded not on speculation, but on the existences every where presented to our observation and inspection; the natural scenes on every side submitted to our contemplation, will be found to announce that the human species, the other animated orders, and all other substances, actually have flourished amid the suns, worlds, and unceasing revolutions of Nature, through an eternity of existence—that infinite things are in perpetual motion, connected, and eternal. Nothing in geology can be more clear than that each distinct stratum of the earth was once its surface; and it is absurd to suppose that one deluge will account for the great number of strata. The succession of vegetable and animal fossils are equally as conclusive; and all unite, with every other step in scientific researches, to overthrow that nonsense called religion.

61. A little knowledge of the world is sufficient to convince us that human society has been, and is still, in a continued and rapid revolution. Even our own limited experience, our histories and traditions, superficial and imperfect as they most certainly are, are yet abundantly sufficient to convince us that extensive countries are overwhelmed by inundations of the ocean—that empires rise and fall—and that, among the nations of the world, barbarism and civilization, knowledge and superstition, eternally succeed each other.

62. In the derangement or formation of the earth's surface, ocean has some auxiliaries. The most powerful of these are volcanoes, earthquakes, and fresh water floods. But these, though frequent, are partial and local agents, and the circle of their action so narrow, as to gratify curiosity and satisfy investigation with a single inquiry or momentary research. On the other hand, the action of the ocean is general, resolute, unremitting, powerful; minute, slow, and imperceptible. The ever-invading element is constant in action, working unseen, and its process is scarcely discoverable in its progress, or noticed on the records of time; and its influence is hardly acknowledged by analogy. The differences which animals and vegetables exhibit, at the present day, according to the various situations or climates in which they occur, have been gradually established under the predominating influence of a small number of natural causes.

63. Any hypothesis as to the production of animals by changes or convulsions in the globe, are but fanciful conjectures, entirely discountenanced by the natural fact that no genus exists in any globe where the descent of its race has not been preserved or transmitted in the natural and eternal course of procreative generations. It is

stone, the depth of 22 yards; and this is followed by limestone, which has not as yet been penetrated. That the limestone, in all these beds, has been gradually formed, through an astonishing succession of ages, the numerous impressions of fishes, and a variety of other circumstances, sufficiently convince us.

absurd to think that planets, or the natural orders of which planets are composed, begin their existence as bodies of water.

64. Astronomy teaches us that the obliquity of the earth's position has been considerably diminished since the preservation of records; that the earth is now in its progress, and the poles becoming more and more perpendicular to the ecliptic; and there is evidence that this progress is not merely an oscillation, but the regular tendency to a result materially to affect and alter its present state as to situation and climate.

65. The motion of the earth, in its orbit and around its axis, produces every year a slight deviation from its relative position in the heavens; this deviation amounts only to twenty-three minutes of a degree annually; but this is sufficient, in the immensity of time, to produce the most stupendous results. The period, during which this globe would complete its entire revolution, must extend itself to upwards of fifty thousand years. Immense as this term may appear, we have every reason to feel assured that many of such terms have already elapsed, and such changes taken place in the position of our earth, and that the scenes we now inhabit have been alternately subjected to the action of the torrid and frigid zones; that, in the course of a remote term, the regions we now inhabit will imperceptibly pass under the rays of the vertical sun, and the animals peculiar to those climates will have become indigenous to the soil which we now occupy, when we and our posterity to the millionth generation shall be forgotten.

66. In a vast portion of the earth, are found the remains of an ancient knowledge, proving that the *poles of the earth were formerly in the plane of the ecliptic*, and that they have been separated from it by a slow motion—a gradual progression—by a spiral recession which produces that effect called by us “the precession of the equinoctial points” and “the diminution of the angle of the ecliptic with the equator.”

67. It is probable that, at periods seldom, indeed, of recurrence in any one system of worlds, but continually and without number in the infinite expanse, there happen great revolutions and terrible catastrophes throughout the universe; since, if planetary bodies conjoin or divide, those operations, both in the inhumations of surface and changed direction of waters by the altered centres of gravity, must be fatal to a great part of the generations existing on the planets undergoing such phenomena. However, the property of coming quietly into junction at those parts of each globe's surface where there were the greatest bodies of water, would spare the destruction that otherwise might take place.

68. The position of the moon discloses the fact that when two bodies, or globes, approach within a certain range, the rotary motion on its axis of that one which is of the lesser volume becomes identified with the action of the greater, so as to have the same part of the former's surface always determined towards the latter; and it

thus becomes ultimately fitted for ultimately settling down in peace on its widest ocean. The planetary satellites have one hemisphere only of each facing its primary; and within a certain distance of the sun, those planets which circulate may, in their approach, have their original rotation gradually diminished and finally arrested.

69. The firmament is a theatre of great events; but the human eye is unable to perceive them.

70. Nature acts always with regularity; but we have not the skill to trace all her phenomena.

71. The regular course of nature is calm and orderly; tempests and troubles are but lapses from the accustomed sobriety with which all things work together.

72. No longer, therefore, are we to regard the loftiest mountains, the most extensive countries, the continents and islands of the globe, nor the substances that constitute the world and universe itself, as of permanent existence. Formed, as well as ourselves, by gradual processes, they are likewise unstable, and subject to perpetual changes. The existence of every species of metal, stone, and earth is necessarily dependant upon the natural fluctuation of the universe. No object presents itself to our contemplation, but of its regular formation and decay we may be fully satisfied. An incessant fluctuation of formations, and dissolution of the objects of existence is necessarily essential to the universe.

73. Natural orders of existence can only be preserved at their own expense. The face of the earth is covered with an infinite number of beings, and these beings exist at the expense of one another; the increase of some depends on the destruction of others; but every species is so prodigiously numerous, that total destruction is not possible.

74. No species exists without a number of varieties; nor any individual that has a perfect resemblance to another. Yet, though all the different shades and touches are thus essentially different, the impression of each genus is a figure, the permanent features of which are engraven in characters so strongly marked, that time can never efface them.

75. Life and death follow in unceasing vicissitude; winter prepares the earth for the genial influence of spring; the vernal warmth causes trees and plants to disclose their blossoms, which summer develops into fruits; the sea supplies, through the air, the rivers with their perennial streams; they return their waters to the deep—and thus all things perpetually revolve in an undeviating round.

76. The world exists but by conflict, and is only maintained by oppositions. All things find their contrarieties to be the foundation of their preservation and perpetuity. All the changes which happen in Nature serve but for its duration; for, while every thing tends to its end—Nature exists always the same—it is permanent; the same things always compose it, and one, in terminating, only supplies room for others to succeed it; the end of the first forms the com-

mencement of the second, and while all things are perishable, it is that a succession may take place—that mankind may be preserved, and the earth's consistency be confirmed. Mutability may be said to constitute the harmony of the universe.

77. Nature, in whatever point of view we consider it, cannot possibly be any thing but that which we perceive it to be.

78. The inscription upon the temple of Isis—the personification of the great mother, Nature—was, “I am whatsoever is, whatsoever has been, whatsoever shall be.”

79. The ancients entertained no fearful ideas respecting death, because, observing faithfully the course of nature, they knew that all identities are finite, and terminate in destruction in order that life may be transmitted to a succession of beings.

80. The series of natural forms and combinations is eternal; but all particular individuals of this eternal series are transitory.

81. To attract and combine that which is in affinity with, and to repel or reject that which is hostile or repugnant to its properties, seems to be a common principle in every variation of substance.

82. The infinite orders of existence operate by affinities for each other, so that the infinite chain of being is connected together by infinite links of relation.

83. The farther we venture in the wide field of analysis, the more we discover that we lose our pains in searching after any element or basis, which may be considered a primary principle of existence.

84. There is no sense, in speaking of things natural, to name their essence—as though aught existed that might be reducible to a constituent principle or basis. The eternal existence is perpetuated by infinite orders of natural affinities or motions, to which the attribute or faculty belongs, to produce their like, or transmit their races by procreation, an individual of one sex co-operating with an individual of the other sex for the purpose; and each individual, thus originated, is capable of exercising its power of appropriation so long as the constitutional vigour and relative circumstances serve for its acquiring its full development and prolonging its life until the organs which act in combination to that effect no longer perform their functions: the orders of nature exist by mutually preying on each other. Our appetites are affinities of the system, for those substances which have in their composition the qualities analogous to, or suitable for, uniting with our own substance.

85. It is by virtue of the nutritive action, or nutrition, that the organs of the body preserve or change their physical properties; and the changes in the moral being correspond. What physiologists have called the vital force is but the necessary or natural exercise of the functions which animal organization possesses, and which exertion is compelled by calls of animal affinities or wants, the gratification of which exigencies is indispensable to its existence, particularly that of nutrition. Let not the physiologist imagine that he can even derive assistance from metaphysics.

86. Art may trace the action of those minute portions of matter called seeds and ovæ, known to be the rudiments of future life, and the links by which the chain of endless generations hang to existence; but the eternal principle can never be disentangled and displayed apart: that principle, under the influence of which each little germ, in its due time, swells out, as if to fill an invisible mould of maturity that determines its form and proportions; that function by which the animal body assumes foreign matters from around, and converts them into its own substance.

87. Every sexual act originates a principle of life—a motive power—or determination of affirmitive ingredients, by which the individual is renewed and inherits the same faculty of procreating; by which races are eternal, and the universe subsists. Effect produces effect; cause produces cause.

88. In the history of every vital being, the act of conception is nothing but the transition, more or less rapid, of a preparatory to a permanent magnetism. In every plant, reproduction, whatever be the process, is a magnetic affinity; and every sexual act, in whatsoever order of generic conformation, is equally an act of such affinity.

89. The act of conception has rendered the individual independent, or, at least, has clothed it with the necessary accessories for its becoming an independent action or body.

90. No knowledge can ever be attained of origin, or mode of commencement for any order of natural existence, and there will be absurdity in even making the attempt to learn more of nature than a science of the physiology of any kind, from its embryo germ to its maturity and destruction. In the economy of life, it is a general law that living beings derive their origin from pre-existing similar beings; the vital motions of animation are communicated from the parent stock; it is life that gives origin to life. The striking characteristics of living beings are generation and death. Life is motion superinduced in matter peculiarly arranged, and death is the cessation of this motion. Vital principle, or principle of life, are the terms used to denote the phenomena of animation. Such words can merely be used to denote our mode of conceiving the subject. "First origin," when applied to natural existence, is nonsense, and no "impenetrable mysteries" need be imagined in the necessarily infinite and eternal modes of natural existence. None of these came first into existence; no animal or vegetable race was originated by any energy or mixture of matter unknown or inconceivable to us; but the infinite genera constitute the perpetuity. Organization, which is the primary condition of life, necessarily precedes the action of those organs in the exercise of which consist the functions of life. The action of every organ constitutes what is denominated its function. Without the organ there is no function, for the plain reason, that, without the instrument by which the action is effected, there is no action. Organization is the antecedent; function is the sequent. The origin of the organization, to which function is related as the sequent, is re-

ferred in every case to a line of pre-existing organizations. Matter neither organizes itself, nor is organized by any cause but one, a preceding organization of a like order. The term "self-existent" is sheer nonsense.

91. To view things as they are is all that we should attempt, and is all that is possible to be done. Did our faculties enable us to observe all the arcana of matter, we could never acquire any other knowledge of them than that they are as they are; and, in knowing this, that is, in seeking every link in the chain of occurrences, we shall know all that ever an omniscient being could know.

92. The same principle of nature is general, but the modification is infinite.

93. Nature in none of her domains can be ever exhausted.

94. If we state that the world had a beginning, a time must have preceded when the world was not; but empty time is nothing; therefore, the world can have had no beginning, but is, in respect to time, eternal.

95. If the world were bounded in respect to space, there would be an empty space surrounding it; but empty space is nothing; therefore, the world cannot be bounded, but is, in respect to space, infinite.

96. If there were a first cause, it must also have been an event, and, as such, it must previously have had a cause; or there would have been an event without a cause, which is absurd; therefore, there is no first cause.

97. That which doth exist, doth exist necessarily; for necessity expresses nothing more than the consequent of causes; where there is a cause, there is a consequent.

98. He who acknowledges an effect, and assigns the cause to an immaterial being, and then affirms that this being existed without a prior cause, the present state of physical knowledge proclaims a driveller.

99. If an infinite universe could not exist without a great being to create it, we shall be under the necessity, on the same principle of reasoning, to invent another great cause to create this great being.

100. Is it not more rational, more simple, more consistent with known facts, to perceive that the universe has ever existed in ceaseless and uniform motion, than to suppose it had a beginning, and was created by a self-existent being? No substance ever arose out of nothing, nor can any substance ever become nothing.

101. It is far easier to conceive the universe to exist as it is, and to contain eternal order and regular dispositions within itself, than to attempt to add lustre to what is already infinitely splendid and magnificent, by having a visionary and speculative recourse to the personifications of our faculties and affections.

102. Facts will speak for themselves, and every man of common observation, who freely exercises the powers of reason on the general

appearances of things, may easily satisfy himself that the doctrine of the eternity of the universe is built upon the solid basis of fact.

103. In the Bramin's book, the Yajur Veid, it is written—"O ye, whose hearts are pure! How could something arise out of nothing?" How, indeed, could infinite existence arise out of nothing?

104. Owing to the contractedness of our minds, and to our constant engagements with particular objects, that have both beginning and ending, not excepting our very existence, we are unable to form an adequate conception of the universe, which can have had no commencement.

105. Our ignorance of the principles and properties of the universe leads us to invent causes of phenomena for which we cannot rationally and scientifically account: this ignorance has been the sole cause of our using those nonsensical expressions—"immateriality," and "personified spirit."

106. The countless worlds—the indefinite immensity of the universe—these are subjects of interesting contemplation. Whoever correctly views this scene of grandeur will be in no danger of delusion by the impostures of religious systems, or of deifying the principle of the universe. When we stand on the surface of this earth, and view the vast, illimitable field of space continued above, beneath, around; system on system extending in countless millions, regulated and upheld by simple natural properties, or by intimate relations with each other—who or what *self-existent*, itself nothing, could make this infinite existence out of nothing? How can intelligence act upon an infinity that admits not itself to be comprehended by intelligence?

107. Endless myriads of suns are ranged around us, attended by innumerable worlds; yet calm, regular, and harmonious—keeping the paths of natural action—of inevitable necessity.

108. Contemplate but this one planet—this mere grain of sand—when compared with those visible to the eye; on this earth you see the highest degree of intelligence, or man, but a mere ephemeral existence; born in a morning, the sport of storms through a day, and dead at night; this is all that can be said of the highest degree of intelligence! And is it not a mockery, or is it ignorance alone, that makes this momentary principle to be a creator of an existence which is not finite?

109. We can conceive of no intelligence separate from one of those organizations by which we see it exercised.

110. The vague idea that some mysterious cause not merely *precedes*, but *produces* the effect we behold, occasions us to wander from the real object in search of an imaginary one.

111. Mystery, from its nature of unintelligibility, demands implicit assent, or faith, which opposes the operations of reason in comparing, examining, doubting, and balancing probabilities; and is, therefore, heterogeneous to mental cultivation.

112. If we observed the sequences of occurrences, they would become associated in our mind as necessary *precedent* and *consequent*—

as cause and effect; and we might give to them the appellation of "law of nature," or any other appellation; but they would still constitute merely a truth—that is, a fact, and envelope no other mystery than that involved in every occurrence and every existence.

113. We trace an effect to a cause, and that cause to another cause, and so on, till we hold some few links of a chain whose extent is without beginning as without end.

114. It is easier to suppose that the universe has existed eternally, than to conceive of a being beyond its fancied limits capable of creating it. If the mind sinks beneath the weight of the one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burden? There can be no mind but finds itself in the same predicament when attempting to comprehend an impossibility.

115. The only idea we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other: wherever this is the case, necessity is clearly established.

116. The phenomena of nature prove the existence of a god, only to some prejudiced men who have been early taught to behold the finger of God in every thing the mechanism of which would embarrass them. In the operations of Nature, the unprejudiced philosopher sees nothing but the power of necessary processes, the permanent and various motion, the customary effects of different combinations of matter infinitely diversified in its movements. Nature should not be viewed as the production of a principle much more unknown than itself. The fact that the eternity of existence is necessary—that time could not possibly have commenced, enables us to view the universe no longer as an enigma. The universal phenomena have been, are, and ever will be the consequences of universal properties, or necessary processes arising from the general nature of existence. Facts wonderful enough may be discernible in those operations the action of which is incontestibly ascertained, but which men possessing more imagination than judgment are still pleased to point out as a series of miraculous wonders, and by the vague and superstitious manner of viewing them, they indirectly become the supporters of many absurd and dangerous errors. These weak and prepossessed imaginations, and particularly the priests of whom they are the creatures, never miss raising the cry of "impiety" when physical science succeeds in forcing any stronghold of their final causes: far from consulting the actions of Nature, they require us to discard scientific knowledge, and summon us menacingly to give credit to their assertions rather than to the demonstrations of the universe. The tendency of the infinite orders of existence is to perpetuate their several races, and this is the necessary end operated. No mental purpose is requisite, nor final or first designing causes to be supposed; nor could any institutory act be exercised, because the self-sustaining process is eternally in action. Universal power is but the necessary and indispensable action of the various orders of being, and its force

is permanent and eternal; because those orders can never be divested of their property to perpetuate their being. When we at length surmount the difficulties we meet in tracing the phenomena proper to natural bodies, we always find ourselves in the same embarrassment relative to the main fact, which can be referred to nothing but the active and eternal mode of Nature, of which we can have no exact idea.

117. To behold and wonder is conduct fit only for the frenzied enthusiast. To study and examine is the more noble character of the reflecting philosopher. The wonders of Nature, as they are called, that is, natural existences, generally, and particularly those relative to animal structure and functions, are doubtless to be admired by observative minds; but they are all facts which may be recognised and even celebrated with all the magnificence of language, without our being forced to acknowledge, in their causes, anything extraneous to the necessary condition of each existence. There is certainly a charm in describing Nature, but this charm no longer imposes on us a fearful power containing in its provisions either phantoms or prognostications. It is time to relinquish notions that originated in the ignorance of former times, when men were not, as now, well informed in respect of natural existence. The fancied invisible beings, clothed by the imagination with awful attributes, have no more existence in reality than the goblins which affright the passions of a child.

118. There are many whose heads are filled with a stupifying sort of wonderment, involved in a mysterious obscurity which awes them; they affect an admiration of Nature, as being a species of magic entirely beyond their comprehension, and a thing is sure to lose in their estimation immediately its explanation is given.

119. When even Paine and other latitudinarians are disposed to appear religious, they exclaim—"How stupendous are the works of Nature! how vast their compass! how immutable their order and movements!" In this can be perceived nothing but an apostrophe to ignorance. Fontenelle says—"If this wondrous order was discovered, few could help observing—what! is that all?"

120. The earth, the clouds, the sun, moon, stars—the spheres of revolving orbs occupying an interminable space—all that is natural, from the trifle with which we are most familiar to the infinite expanse which no sentiment can encompass—all are the rational subjects of interest and admiration; but to run wild in imagination, and suppose ourselves enabled to pass in person beyond earth's limits—to leap the immensity of distance separating us inevitably from other globes—to climb up and scale the gates of a visionary highest heaven—to hear the melody of feigned seraphs' harps, and join in eternal unison with the hymns of imaginary angels—all such poetic flights of the fancy can only be termed "vapors," "dreams," subsisting alone by illusion and ignorance.

121. The fanatic Paul, "caught up into the third heaven, and

hearing things not lawful for man to speak!" Impudent impostor! Yet this is the sacred stuff that the Christian church would massacre us for disrespecting!

122. The moment man quits the path of Nature, he stumbles into an abyss of absurdities and difficulties; his imagination bewilders him. Unacquainted with the powers of Nature, man attributes all the phenomena he beholds to supernatural agency.

123. That sublime harmony which pervades the world is not confined to the course of the stars. Millions of globes, scattered and revolving throughout infinite space, form but their part in the general principle. The eternal chain of order, connecting together the periods of eternity and the parts of infinity, combines, with its incalculable link, the solar globes which impart light and life even with the invisible animalcule that is born and dies in an hour. This eternal harmony, so imposing in its immensity, is still more striking in its imperceptible detail—comprehending all objects, and, in its operations, tracing for the earth its orbit, and arranging the sources of life in all its ramifications.

124. How does the imagination expand, when we regard the infinite number of fixed stars as so many suns furnishing their vivifying qualities to infinite beings existing on their planetary attendants, the reflected lights of which are merged in the solar lights.

125. Herschell extended his astronomical researches, and penetrated into regions of space of a remoteness eluding calculation; and he developed views of the construction of our system and of the universe, of a daring sublimity, hardly more surprising than the strictness of induction on which they rest.

126. The distance of the planet Herschell from the sun is twice that of the planet Saturn; and the distance from the sun to the precincts of those other planetary systems immediately contiguous to our own is supposed to be from twenty to thirty times as far as that of Herschell; leaving space both between Saturn and Herschell, and beyond Herschell, for many more planets to revolve round our sun than those which are perceptible to us. The approach of our earth seventy millions of leagues nearer at one time than at another to the fixed star that seems to be nearest to us, making not the least alteration in its appearance, and no possibility existing for calculating its distance from us by any determined parallax, it is likely that the extent of our planetary sphere is much greater than has been imagined; however, according to the opinion of astronomers, founded on a calculation of the point to which our sun must be removed in order to diminish its apparent size to that of a star of the first magnitude, the distance of Sirius has been fixed at eighty thousand times that of the sun, or forty thousand times the diameter of the earth's orbit; so that there exists an immense extent in which other planets may circulate unseen by us in the system of our sun.

127. The planet Saturn and its appurtenances probably exhibit

the appearances of separated masses of a former larger planet, a zone of which was firmly enough cemented to retain its original position; and at present it forms that hoop shaped world, within which is centred the mass of greatest volume, and the other masses circulate around the two—so many satellites—displaying seven isolated worlds, all originally forming but one, which was thus pulled to pieces by opposite gravitating bodies acting upon it—by the casual encounter of conflicting gravities or volumes which passed swiftly off in the course of their orbits, without time being allowed for determining the fragments into far wider and different directions.

128. Comets may be bodies which, having revolved in the precincts of one solar sphere, are, by the conjunctive power of bodies acting upon them in an adjoining system, drawn into the vortex of the predominating influence; and, indeed, their precipitated velocities may be one means of maintaining the orbicular movements in general.

129. Terrestrial globes are not organized beings, for they are not formed of systems of vessels fixed in them in a permanent and generic manner, and having between them sustained connexions; they are destitute, also, of the most characteristic vital faculty; the faculty of procreation does not pertain to them.

130. It was the opinion of Spinoza that the universe is God. How can the object of a will be the will itself? How can an accomplishment be the power of accomplishing? How can an act of volition be the seat of volition? How can the effect be the cause? How can the thing governed be the power to govern?

131. Nature, or the universe, moves not by a single volitive impulse. We come at no such idea as that this vast, unlimited medium—this infinite ensemble of things—acts and moves by will. We acquire the idea of will by contemplating a minute part of the general system. We find it in percipient orders of being, but we cannot infer from this that the universal compound has a will—has the peculiar affections which distinguish the individual of our species. For, though it produces all things physically, and consists of all causes, all changes, operations, and appearances, yet, not by intention, as a moral agent, can it be said to perform or produce anything, or have anything properly applied to it as such. To imagine the infinite machine of the universe operating by choice and will, and moving by design its limbs and members, is a monstrous chimera.

132. Observing the earth, with its modes of existence, we conclude through the rules of analogy in genus and species, that the universe of planets is composed of natural orders.

133. The effort of the mind to conjecture the origin, end, and causation of existence, is a process concluded by reducing all being, or Nature, into its universal genus; and, through the medium of observation, the two objects are perceived—indestructibility and unlimited circulation of matter in duration and space.

134. Nature, in the fullest acceptation of the term, is the enchainment of causes and effects resulting from the action and reaction of

the material orders of being ; the formation and decomposition of all those bodies the aggregate of which constitutes the universe. The propositions and arguments, at variance with this immutable course of being, may be considered as opposed to Nature, and, in such respect, calculated to lead reason astray, which ought always to be conformable with Nature.

135. If we admit a commencement, nothing existed, and a creation took place. In case of a creation being accomplished, it became first necessary to create space. Where was this space to be placed ? Nowhere. That is not possible. In an already existing extent ? Extent and space are the same thing ; and, in admitting the eternity of space, you cannot but admit the eternity of coinfinite substantial orders, or Nature. How could the infinite be subsequent to a part ? How absurd the expression, “ extremities of the universe ! ” How silly all such suppositions about commencement and creation ! It is possible for those who believe that matter was created out of nothing to believe in any absurdity whatsoever.

136. The visible stars, their primary and secondary planets, together with the comets, indeed, constitute a more trifling portion of existence than our sun does when compared to the innumerable other suns that come within the sphere of our observation ! For, though the sun, that blazes to our contemplation, and enlivens with its genial influence our momentary existence, is supposed to be upwards of a million times larger than the earth which we inhabit, and retains, by the superior force of its volume, its attendant planets in their respective orbits, yet does this immense body, when compared with the universe, dwindle into an insignificant star of the milky way ! Is the infinite existence but of yesterday, as superstition would force us to believe ?

137. What is it to us how the climates change and countries alter situations, or how the seas forsake their stations, when the essential truths of a sublime and interesting species of philosophy absorb every less important consideration, and must undoubtedly convince us that nothing is at rest ; that the very seas, the countries, the world, the universe itself, are composed of substances continually in fluctuation ; that stars participate in endless action ; that all things are connected and eternal ; and that Nature exists but in changes and in motion ?

138. The combination of the beauties of reviving Nature, and the horrors of destruction, excites an indescribable emotion of felicity and woe, without which the spectacle of the world can neither be comprehended nor described : the ever decaying and renovating varieties of permanent and everlasting genera—these are the universe.

139. There is no genus of existence that has not been, and will not be, of eternal duration in its kinds.

140. Were any one genus, or order of animal or vegetable life, to become extinct on the surface of any globe, or were it possible for any globe or number of globes to be entirely deprived of the generating orders, there is no genus that would not exist infinitely in the infinity

of other worlds; and, in the course of the eternal movement, each destitute globe would again become partially or fully repopulated, in the incalculable period of time required for its conjoining with other globes. It is possible that there is not any single globe occupied by more than, comparatively, a small part of the infinite variety of the eternal orders.

141. Infinity, in no kind, can suffer infringement. The foundations of Nature admit of no interposition.

“ ——— Far as the remotest line
That bounds imagination’s flight,
Countless and unending orbs,
In mazy motion intermingled,
Yet still fulfilled immutably
Eternal Nature’s law.
Above, below, around,
The circling systems formed
A wilderness of harmony,
In this interminable wilderness
Of worlds, at whose immensity
Even soaring fancy staggers.”

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER II.

OF MAN—RACE OF MANKIND, AS WELL AS OF EVERY OTHER KIND,
UNCOMMENCED—MIND THE EXERCISE OF THE CORPOREAL FUNCTIONS—FOLLY OF BELIEF IN SOUL AND ITS IMMORTALITY—
IDEAS THE OFFSPRING OF THE SENSES.

1. "Time passes," we hear said every day. Duration is fixed ; it is we ourselves that pass away. Each individual occupies but an imperceptible point in time. A man's life is merged in that of his family, and that of a nation in the duration of the world. Time is a sea which absorbs the streams that rush into its bosom ; itself only is invariable ; all we behold is but the fleeting present of a universal and eternal scene of a similar kind of existence.

2. We are but as an imperceptible point, gleaming for a day, and then becoming extinguished among the innumerable points which are uninterruptedly appearing and disappearing.

3. An epidemic that mows down millions of men, an earthquake which swallows up an entire generation, are but occasional consequences of general laws. A man dies in a hamlet and is buried ; the rest continue to enjoy their lives. The inhabitants of a planet are not so much in relation to the universe as a single man to a city. The insensible extinction of life, and all the evils of humanity, are of no account in the infinite existence. The death of a thinking man, who expires in the midst of inconsolable friends, and that of a butterfly perishing by the nipping frost in the calice of a flower, are similar events in the course of Nature. In Nature, species only are of moment ; individuals of none.

4. Annihilation is a word void of sense ; all the use that can be made of it is, to apply it to the operation by which any material object changes its modification, and by which, if it possessed the organs of sensation, the consciousness of what it had been ceases.

5. What is termed animal putrefaction is but the separation of organic substances, caused by swarming animalculæ, which draw their nourishment therefrom, and then are distributed through the general mass.

6. The question of the materiality or fancied immateriality of the human mind, is one replete with intense interest. Nothing can con-

cern us more than the nature and condition of our being. We cannot wonder that the mind is so curious to examine its own self, and to contemplate as well its qualities as its capacity.

7. It is a truth of inestimable consolation to the man of reason and nature, that the great science of self, in its relations to the universe, is all placed within the reach of a well-informed intellect.

8. Natural phenomena can only be accounted for by a careful and repeated attention to them. Our knowledge of the properties of matter and mind depends entirely on the permanency and stability of the order of Nature, and on that constitution of the human mind by which our ideas are associated. The harmony of the order of Nature implies that, every preceding circumstance being the same, every following circumstance will be the same.

9. Man, the moral animal, whose frail generations begin and pass away, is but one of the links of an infinite and eternal chain of beings like himself.

10. Individual man, like the individual of any other particular species of the infinite family of animals, is subject to the same condition of birth, growth, maturity, decay, and dissolution; and his existence serves but to assist in maintaining the eternal line of his species. The human race is but one of many genera of animals, all living and dying to one end—merely to furnish life to successive generations.

“ Life, in multitudinous shapes,
Still pressing forward where no term can be.”

11. Disorders, physical and moral; the decay of our organs, and, consequently, that of our intellect; the necessity of death, in order that the imperceptible portion of that eternal principle which composed our being should revert to the general mass, and be added to the means of sustaining the succeeding generation of conformations; the slow but sure re-union of our remains with the mouldering crust of ruins which covers the surface of the earth—are these signs of immortality?

12. All that constitutes our being comes from the earth, and will revert to it, to become differently modified. This consists with the mortality of individuals and eternity of generations. Doubtless the material orders are eternal, and compose the infinitely pervading Nature.

13. The frame of humanity shall be resolved into the general existence; shall melt into the general mass of Nature, to be recombined into other forms with which those that disappear are constantly supplied.

14. Do we find intelligence to exist beyond the animal world? Is a result of animated matter, or does it produce that matter as a result?

15. The human body is as much a compound as the earth and its atmosphere; and it is as impossible to develop clearly the sources of motion in the one as in the other.

16. To die is the condition of our birth; but it harmonizes with the rest of the system, in which infinite matter is perpetually changing its shapes.

17. By the violent emotions of affection and passion, death, or the end of consciousness, is dreaded as though it would leave a sense of deprivation—as though suffering a loss of life would be felt after all sense has terminated. What is death but the ceasing to feel?

18. The human frame so entirely returns to its original dust, as to preserve no traces of its former lineaments, and only to break forth afresh, combined with its kindred principle, in the shape of plants and other animated beings. Its precincts suffer transition from entire universal death and dereliction to new modification of life.

19. The soil now pressed by me, might once have been animated like myself; the mould which now clings to my feet, once formed limbs and features like my own! Like myself, all this black unseemly dust once thought, and willed, and moved.

20. The eternal movement admits of the infinite principle of substance undergoing infinite changes of modification; and the most solid materials contained in the central depths of globes or suns of greatest volume, and infinitely remote from one another, may each supply portions of future combinations. There may be nothing which has not, in the constantly intermingling process of Nature, in endless repetitions entered into that modification which occasions the highest flowers of intellect to blossom—even man.

21. What is man, or any other identity? Yesterday's clay; to-morrow's dust! In a few years, all that moves—all that owns the breath of life, will pass away.

22. We discover that intellectual faculties must have a body, or material organs of sensation, together with a locality or station, to support that body, and form a medium of action for its energies. Examining the visible and invisible universe, by the experience of knowledge, we shall discover that intellect is an accident or quality of natural mode of being.

23. The innumerable phenomena, which form the intellect of man, are only modifications of the faculty of perception.

24. Taking mind in its most enlarged sense, it is nothing more than a power of providing for the wants and desires of the body; and this power exists, more or less, in every animated being.

25. If man has more of reason than any other animal, it is because he has greater wants and faculties.

26. As the false expressions applied to important ideas cannot easily be discarded, on account of their antiquity and a kind of general consent having consecrated their use, the term "soul" is still continued, to designate the effects which result from our corporeal faculties.

27. What is called the soul, then, moves with us. While we walk forward, we do not leave our souls behind. Soul, therefore, possesses one quality in common with the body, and peculiar to matter. The

soul is allied with the body, and experiences all its vicissitudes, in passing through a state of infancy and of debility, in partaking of its pleasures and its pains; and with the body exhibiting marks of dullness, decay, and death. In short, it is only the body viewed in relation to some of its functions. What sort of substance is an immaterial power, yet acting upon motion? How can the body inclose a fugitive being, which eludes all the senses?

28. The soul is only the principle of sensibility. To think, to suffer, to enjoy, is to feel. When the body, therefore, ceases to live, it cannot exercise sensibility. Where there are no senses, there can be no ideas. The soul only perceives by means of the organs; how, then, is it possible for it to feel after their dissolution? As Lawrence says, "The soul, or life, has no independent existence; it is a mere assemblage of accidental or temporary properties—an assemblage of purposes—a series of phenomena—a name without a thing."

29. How is it that our souls did not think, until the faculties of perception became developed, in proportion as our organs acquired their consistency? Why is it that we find our mental energies begin to fail as we decline in life? How is it that a person, the functions of whose brain are slightly deranged, can never act rationally?

30. The same kind of facts, the same reasoning, the same sort of evidence altogether, which shows digestion to be the function of the alimentary canal; motion of the muscles, the various secretions of the respective glands, prove that sensations, perceptions, memory, judgment, thought—in a word, all the manifestations called mental or intellectual, are but the uses, the animal functions, of their appropriate apparatus, the central organ of the nervous system.

31. Where shall we find proofs of the mind's independence on the bodily structure?—of that mind which, like the corporeal frame, is infantile in the child, manly in the adult, sick and debilitated in disease, extinguished in syncope, frenzied or melancholy in the madman, enfeebled in the decline of life, doating in decrepitude, and annihilated by death.

32. The *foetus* of the mind is born with the material frame of man, is in a state of infancy with it, matures with it; and when we arrive at what is called second childhood, experience declares that the pretended immortal soul has passed the zenith of its powers, is now in a state bordering upon idiotcy, and must shortly perish with the worn out body.

33. Examine the mind—the grand prerogative of man! Where is the mind of the animal *foetus*? Where that of the child just born? Do we not see it actually built up before our eyes by the action of the five external senses, and of the gradually developed internal faculties? Do we not trace it advancing by a slow progress, through infancy and childhood, to the perfect expansion of its faculties in the adult; annihilated for a time by sleep, by a blow on the head, by submersion in water, or the shedding of a little blood in apoplexy; decaying as the body declines in old age, and finally reduced to an

amount hardly perceptible, when the body, worn out by the mere exercise of the organs, reaches, by the simple operation of natural decay, that state of decrepitude most aptly termed second childhood?

34. Whatever be the number and diversity of the phenomena which belong to human intelligence, it is necessary to consider them as the results of the action of the brain: the functions of the brain are absolutely subject to the same laws as the other functions; they are developed and go to decay in the progress of age; they are modified by habit, sex, temperament, and individual disposition; they become confused, weakened, or enervated by disease; the physical injuries of the brain impair and destroy them. Admit no air into the lungs for a few seconds, and this chimerical being called the soul loses all command over the body, and in a few minutes it will be no longer a soul. Press a certain part of the spinal marrow, and the legs will refuse obedience; press another part, and the arms become powerless; press another part, and the soul is extinguished. In suspended animation, the soul is gone; restore animation by setting the machinery of the bodily functions again into action, and the soul is reproduced.

35. Whoever is capable of analysing his own ideas will discover, on a little reflection, that he has not the slightest notion of any action or motion but what is drawn from the motions and actions of the inanimate world.

36. Though we may strive to refine, rarify, subtilize, and spiritualize the human mind, we cannot form a single conception of it distinct from matter.

37. What are called the immediate perceptions of the soul, are but opinions formed already in the course of reflection.

38. All the different expressions we give to our ideas, represent both the nature and quality of those ideas; they represent them as an effect represents a cause.

39. The soul—the spirit—is nothing more than the mind—the affections—the opinions. We can have no ideas of God, or spirits; it is, therefore, impossible that our minds should be souls united with God.

40. To speak of things as if they could be, at the same time, distinct and immaterial, is to hold the language of illusion and incoherence; it is assuming, as objects of examination and discussion, things the existence of which is impossible.

41. The existence and action of the mind are subordinate to the existence and action of the body. If our mind possessed an independent existence and action—if certain operations could only be performed by it, and if it were immaterial—it must not, nor could be, assisted or hindered in its operations by circumstances which relate only to the body.

42. Deprived of external objects, the mind could have no ideas, for there is no idea but what relates to exterior objects; but if man

himself were destitute of organs of sensibility, he could not have a single idea. His acquisition of ideas has, therefore, for its necessary foundation, the connection established between his organs of sense and external objects. Our sensible organs are nothing more than the exterior development of the sensible or nervous system. What we call experience is but compounded sensation.

43. Let us, then, rid ourselves of that antiquated and absurd blunder, consisting in the belief that moral principles are, as it were, infused into our heads, and the same in all; and, consistently with this notion, to attribute to them a kind of origin more divine than the other ideas which may exist in our understanding. Let us discard this old prejudice, which is nothing less than a branch of that which supposed all our ideas to be innate, that is to say, that our perceptions existed before we were sensible of them; and let us acknowledge that the science of morals which we compose is, like all others, the result of our experience and reflection.

44. Will is only a mode of animal mind. Moral qualities are such as only a human being can possess; to attribute them to a principle of the universe, is to annex to it properties incompatible with any possible definition of its nature.

45. The will appears nothing but a desire or aversion sufficiently strong to produce action; muscular motion can only be connected by association with that desire which is strongest. Can desire or aversion exist in the mind without a connection with certain causes by which they are respectively produced?

46. The will is a mere operation of the mind upon the objects of perception or sense; and the mind being a part of the universal system, its operations must be subject to the general laws of matter.

47. The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind, consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

48. That must exist to man which exists to his senses.

49. Let any man inquire of himself whether he has certainty of any thing that is not conveyed to him by his senses, and whether the desire of obtaining pleasure and avoiding pain is not the first motive of all his actions?

50. All reasonings concerning matter of fact seem to be founded in the relation of cause and effect. By means of that relation alone can we go beyond the evidence of our memory and sense.

51. No object ever discovers, by the qualities which appear to the senses, either the causes which produced it, or the effects which will arise from it; nor can our reason, unassisted by experience, ever draw any inferences concerning real existence and matter of fact.

52. Truth, as it respects our being, its derivation, and destiny, is a term synonymous with reality and Nature. It is the understanding of truth which principally engages the young mind—eagerly and ardently occupies it in the discovery of facts to enable its forming satisfactory conclusions. Application and perseverance in the study of Nature are repaid by that knowledge the possession of which yields

the highest delight, and constitutes that which alone can truly be called philosophy. Few surmount the obstacles that exist to the attainment of the science of the system of Nature. Few experience that summit of enjoyment afforded by an acquaintance with man and all which relates to him. Few are released from those fears, those deceptions, those vain hopes, and that ignorance which render the lives of men so vague and miserable

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CHAPTER III.

MYTHOLOGICAL SUPERSTITIONS ; THEIR SOURCE ; THEIR TENDENCY ;
USES MADE OF THEM BY DESPOTS AND PRIESTS ; DEPLORABLE
CONDITION OF MAN SUBJECTED TO THEIR INFLUENCE—FOLLY OF
BELIEF IN SPIRITUAL OR SUPERNATURAL EXISTENCES.

1. Superstitions, or mythological systems of supernatural powers and spiritual agencies, have, in all ages, established an intellectual and material idolatry founded upon the abuse of analogy ; thus man being an artist of mechanism, they analogize the order of universal Nature, and conclude some mode of intellectual existence must be its cause. If we examine, we shall find that human mechanism has nothing of similitude in genus or species with the infinite and unalterable modes of perpetuity. The works of men, as watch, house, &c., have no power of reproduction, which distinguishes the orders of Nature in animals and vegetables ; or of combination by affinities, as in minerals.

2. The philosopher loves truth rather than custom ; his men are not deities ; he will not be contented with dicta instead of evidence ; he will not bend his neck before the blood-tinged altar of superstition ; he requires proofs whenever proofs can be had ; he will not believe propositions contradictory and unnatural in themselves ; he will not acknowledge pretended principles which vanish from before the scrutinizing eye of investigation ; he demands the best possible evidence whenever his assent is required ; he concurs in no rules which abridge the personal comfort or impede the intellectual march of men in general ; he will submit to no inflictions of despotism, whether mental or corporeal.

3. Among the innumerable errors into which men have fallen, by confounding fictitious with real objects, is that of supposing an infinite power, cause, wisdom, or intelligence to exist, from only considering the properties of wisdom, power, and intelligence in the beings whom they see ! The term “infinite” is totally incompatible with any thing finite.

4. All ideas of a God derived from human nature are ridiculous, and reason will not allow of our believing for a moment in such a being.

5. Intelligent power is but a mockery of natural power ; the contrivances of art are, at most, but a faint effort to imitate designless Nature.

6. There is no analogy between natural productions and intelligent arrangements of those productions ; consequently no proof of intelligence as an existence separate from animal existence.

7. It behoved Paley to show, as a first principle, that the properties of matter were unequal to its arrangement without an intelligent contriver or designing power. So far from intelligence being essential to natural productions, all that it can do is, to imitate what he (Paley) quoted as an admirable expression, "*the insatiable varieties of Nature.*"

8. All that Paley has proved is, that he, like ourselves, was ignorant of the powers, processes, and phenomena of Nature.

9. Intelligence is not discoverable where we do not see animal sensation.

10. There never can be any thing in art, but its principle is derived from Nature. If properties natural and inevitable had not existed, there never could have been accomplished any thing artificial and conventional. Man creates nothing ; he invents nothing absolutely new and extra natural ; he merely, in all that he executes, draws his consequences and makes his combinations from things that are ; it would be as impossible for him to conceive an idea or a relation that does not derive its source from Nature, as it would be for him to provide himself with a sense which should have no connexion with his natural senses. The arts are but the use of natural means. Had watches derived their existence from generation, or vegetation, or chemical affinities, we should have no more right to conclude that the first watch was made by an unknown incomprehensible being, than we have that there were a first man and woman created by such a being.

11. All fiction is, and must be, more or less built upon Nature ; nor has the most extravagant any very distant resemblance to it ; we can only combine. It is beyond the power of man to invent any thing which shall have no smack and admixture of reality throughout its whole. The wildest inventions are only partial departures from the order of Nature ; but to Nature they always look back, and must ultimately be referred.

12. Reasoning from their little experience attached to human life, personifying their faculties and affections, the bulk of mankind lose sight of the infinity and eternity of existence, and seem ever disposed to produce the phantoms of their own creation, the personifications of their perfections and imperfections, as the causes of the world and the infinite objects of the universe.

13. The argument of Blair and others, for the annihilation, or returning into nothingness of the world, matches their test of preceding nonentity. A man ceases to breathe, and a plant is decomposed ; therefore, this massive earth shall be no more ; if so, as the

earth acts and is acted on by other orbs revolving through the immensity of space, the transitory state of superficial forms infers a rout and annihilation to this system of the universe. Away with such dreams; "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever."

14. As divines formed the world from nothing, they dogmatize, that, at no remote period, it shall return to its original vacuity. To expatiate from a sanctuary on combustion, and hell, and the dissolution of the world, is the grand rhetorical figure of priests in all periods and nations.

15. Whatever may be their pretensions, the partizans of religion can only prove that every thing is the effect of other preceding effects—that we are often ignorant of the immediate causes of the effects we see—that even when we discover them, we find that they are the effects of other causes, and so on, *ad infinitum*. But they neither have proved, nor can they prove, the necessity of ascending to a first eternal cause, the universal cause of all particular ones, producing not only the properties, but even the existence of things, and which is independent of every other cause. It is true we do not always know the tie, chain, and progress of every cause; but what can be inferred from that? Ignorance can never be a reasonable motive either of belief or of determination.

16. Omnipotence is the necessary course of infinite and eternal Nature—a power consisting in a perpetual process, and not in sentiment; no power besides this is possible.

17. A close examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition is the only secure way of arriving at truth.

18. The great Newton writes—"I do not invent hypotheses; for whatever is not deduced from phenomena is to be called a hypothesis; and hypothesis, either metaphysical or physical, or grounded on occult qualities, should not be allowed any room in philosophy." To all alleged proofs of the existence of a creative God, apply this valuable rule. From the phenomena which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities.

19. We should strictly guard against the admission of any hypothesis which neither has regard to demonstrable truths nor certain facts. It is by wandering astray from these grounds that so many errors, and so many foolish speculations have inundated the world.

20. In entering on the study of any subject, the moment we launch into suppositions, confusion ensues; and we may be assured that we shall never view matters in their proper light. It was this truth which caused Newton to exclaim, "O physics! beware of metaphysics!"

21. Man, unfortunately for himself, wishes to exceed the limits of his sphere, and to transport himself beyond the visible world; he neglects experience, and feeds himself with conjectures. Early prepossessed against reason, he neglects its cultivation. Pretending to

know his fate in another world, he is inattentive to his happiness in the present life. We torment our lives by an insatiable desire of knowing and comprehending an imaginary world, and perceive not the simple realities which form the extent of all possible knowledge. An unnatural ambition incites us to seek in the past, and in the future, an explication of fancied mysteries, which enlightened human reason knows to exist only in imagination.

22. Theologians are ready with their suppositions, and, what is more presumptuous, they pretend that their assertions are the mandates of God, and thus they shut the door against all investigation.

23. Religious faith, as far as reason and knowledge can comprehend its action, is a mere affection of the moral temperament, excited by the operations of fancy, agitated by hopes and fears, to admit the dictates of authority, however absurd, without any examination.

24. The mind of man, by reason of ignorance, is prone to superstition, and fond of the marvellous.

25. Weakness, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, are the true sources of superstition.

26. Ignorance and fear are the hinges of all religion.

27. To vouch for the being of a God, men have supposed a beginning, not only to this world, but to the infinity of worlds—and to all things; and they have given a creative power to an uncreated nothing; as if it were a solution of the question to say, that nothing created its own nonentity into an active creating power, and out of nothing produced every thing! Let the reasoner consider this; the ignorant and the fanatic cannot.

28. It is the superstitious believer and the interested priest who receive with disapprobation and distrust the communications and circumstances tending to subvert their ill-founded opinions, and not formed to flatter the grossness of their prejudices. To such, no truth can be made sufficiently obvious; to them, no observations that are important can be too repeatedly enforced.

29. Yet what arguments, what proofs, what facts, can make an impression upon men that are prejudiced and superstitious! Taught to domineer it over Nature, truth, and reason, they will not admit their light, but are callous to conviction. Lasting enemies to good sense—strangers in speculation, and too often in practice, to what is real virtue and morality—at mortal variance with every thing that is mild and amiable in life, they invariably oppose both their own happiness and that of mankind—the real interests of society.

30. What can we judge of those vain reasoners who, instead of regarding the present scene of things as the sole object of their contemplation, so far reverse the whole course of Nature as to render this life merely a passage to something farther—a porch which leads to a greater and vastly different building.

31. The paradise of human inventions is never more than an imaginary eternity of unalloyed human pleasures, varied according to the taste of the inventor. Thus a heaven is built up with the shadows

of carnal affections, or the brighter effulgence of self-pleasing fancy. A period comes when some wily politician, or more vivid dreamer, substantiates the dim surmises of the longing soul into a scheme of national belief, and asserts imperatively that the forms indistinctly beheld in the magic mirror have a corresponding reality in time and place—an objective existence. The fleeting vapors of passionate imagination are condensed, and, as it were, precipitated. They become a power separate from the mind—controlling the will, and modifying the total nature.

32. People will never suffer themselves to be undeceived in matters relating to the time to come. There is a charm in it, and they will doat on. Men never turn their cares upon being happy in the present moment; that is an affair adjourned to hereafter.

33. So enamoured are mankind of a dark antiquity—so averse to consider themselves the fleeting forms of a day—that, not content with deluding themselves with the hope of a future immortality, they would fain extend their existence through the dark backward and abyss of time, and claim a share and identity with the very calamities of past generations.

34. The vulgar and uninformed spirit is apt to be passionate, credulous, precipitate, and obstinate; to be a lover of the marvellous, the dupe of antiquity, or mysterious errors—to despise simple truth, to see through the eyes of others, to judge of merit by fortune, to decide upon truth or justice by the authority of the rich, or the voice of the multitude, to mistake sound for sense, the great speaker for the great man—to confound passion with zeal, to take faith for reason, diffidence for ignorance—and lastly, to libel and undervalue the liberty of investigation and inquiry as a species of licentiousness.

35. The design of all religion is to instil into the mind an insurmountable dread and terror of an ideal incomprehensibility denominated God; and when this is effected, the priest substitutes self in the place of divinity; the will of the priest is called the word of God, and such is ecclesiastical tyranny, that, to dare to investigate this, even in thought, is made a crime. The composers of the various religious codes had cunning and foresight enough to see that their fraudulent farce of idolatry and superstition was open to suspicion, and that their doctrines would not bear a critical examination; and their knowledge of the curiosity of man determined them to guard against the inquisitive powers of reason and the boldness of truth, by means of force, and an alliance between church and despotism.

36. Nothing can be more injurious to society than dogmas of faith, for they invest the preacher with omnipotence. The vain assumption to teach what is superior to reason debauches the nature of man; from preaching the miraculous law they become the law; the obedience of people in the one determines their acquiescence in the other. The priest then seats himself in judgment on all mankind, and as they agree or differ from his faith, he dismisses them to hell.

or heaven, making God the almoner of his charity, or the executioner of his vengeance.

37. The cause why superstition, or religion, has survived the progress of reason is, that it has been protected from exposure by the severest penalties. As the clergy have been so completely triumphant through all departments, legal, popular, and honorary, and so powerful by their revenues and numbers, the inquisitive and liberal could expect little less for publishing their sentiments than banishment, confiscation, torture, or death. To have common sense was a crime much more dangerous than to be either a thief or an assassin.

38. Philosophy never had a fair opportunity to encounter the bloated and gloomy demon of clerical despotism.

39. Milton wrote—"Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple—who ever knew her put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"

40. In all things except religion, we have such reliance on the power of truth, that we think it unnecessary to defend it with pains and penalties.

41. It is both amusing and instructive to notice the difference between an attack by ridicule on truth and on error. Upon the former, every weapon tried falls pointless and powerless; while on the latter every cut makes a deeper and deeper impression.

42. "Priests of all persuasions," says Goldsmith, "are enemies to ridicule, because they know it to be a most formidable antagonist to fanaticism; and they preach up gravity to conceal their own shallowness of imposture."

"Much was believed, and little understood;
And to be grave was construed to be good."

43. Superstition forced man to believe, or say he believed, that a being existed, who possessed all power, wisdom, and goodness; that he could do, and that he did every thing, and yet that evil and misery superabound; and that this being, who makes and does all things, is not the direct or indirect author of evil and misery. Such is the foundation on which all the mysteries and ravings of superstition are erected in all parts of the world.

44. All our fears dogmas, terrors, and doubts hang like mill-stones on our jaded imaginations, and we tremble in idea at the black shadow which malignant superstition has hung over us. Assuming the name of religion, she would appear as a holy virgin descended from heaven to assuage the calamities of mankind; and while she talks of encircling our hearts with a divine charity, and affects to offer virtue a crown of glory, she is really all the while a fury armed with serpents and torches and reigning by terror: she consecrates falsities, stifles the voice of remorse, and confirms the slavery of the people.

45. The gaunt spectre of religion seizeth upon man in his cradle,

accompanieth him during his whole existence, and, more frightful in its threats than consoling in its promises, followeth him to his very tomb. Timorous mortals dare not account, even to themselves, for their own opinions; and, crouching under the servile yoke of priests, from the dawn of life to the night of death, sacrifice their reason to faith—a word which, in religion, is synonymous with credulity.

46. Dogmatical assumption of their own tenets; the bitterest invectives against all who question them—these are the expedients employed to deter people from demanding, or even from whispering doubts which might call for a solution. “He who believeth shall be saved; he who believeth not shall be damned.”

47. The object of those who govern nations is to dupe the community at large. Recourse must therefore be had to mysteries and invisibilities; an engine must be erected on human credulity, to play upon and extinguish the light of reason.

48. There is not a greater bar to the progress of the human mind, than that veil of mystery which it seems to have been a part of the business of the learned professions to throw over every kind of knowledge. Let every individual, for himself and in his own profession, doubt in every thing that wears the appearance of mystery, or that he cannot account for on simple principles; on every subject let him seek for the naked truth, in which alone there is solid and manly satisfaction to the mind and safety to the conduct.

49. Truth every where lies in small compass. It is the pestiferous and fatal property of error to be expansive and difficult of condensation.

50. It is upon the utter ignorance on which all the theories about a god are founded, that it is impossible to bring forward a word in direct refutation of them; because, the moment we attempt to reason the matter, we find that we have nothing to reason about.

51. The infinite progression of bodies which have been in eternal succession, cause and effect, soon fatigued men desirous of discovering a general cause for every particular effect. They all at once, therefore, ascended to a first cause, supposed to be universal, in relation to which every particular cause is an effect, though not itself the effect of any cause. The only idea they can give of it is, that it produced all things; not only the form of their existence, but even their existence itself. It is not, according to them, either a body, or a being like particular beings; in a word, it is the universal cause, and this is all they can say about it.

52. Nothing is more likely, when the mind is on the stretch after something supernatural, than that the imagination should supply the place with a chimera, while the over excited feelings render it difficult to dispel the delusion.

53. Few have looked deeply and steadily into the nature of things, and not called in question belief in existences unknown, and causes unknown.

54. It is probable that the word *god* was originally only an ex-

pression denoting the unknown cause of the known events which men perceived in the universe. By the vulgar mistake of a metaphor for a real being—of a word for a thing—it became a man endowed with human qualities, governing the universe as an earthly monarch governs his kingdom. Their addresses to this imaginary being are much in the same style as those of subjects to a king; they acknowledge his benevolence, deprecate his anger, and supplicate his favour.

55. The source from which gods were taken was soon forgotten. An incomprehensible being was formed from the power of Nature, and called its mover. Thus Nature was separated from itself, and came to be considered as an inanimate mass, incapable of action, but as the passive yielder to a kind of spiritual or magic influence. In the darkness of ignorance, the imbecile mind of man conceived vain dreams of something superior to man existing in the clouds, unapproachable by human powers, and inaccessible to understanding or sense. The magnifying genius of superstition alarmed the fancy; the imagination, carried beyond the bounds of existence, created a new incomprehensible world; and, as the mind was lost and bewildered in gloomy uncertainty, images of terror alone peopled the dark habitation. That weak minds—women and children—may be taught to harbour such notions, is by no means extraordinary; but that sensible, well-informed men, should give credit to what they cannot see, feel, hear, nor comprehend—what they can never have the most remote idea of, is a most astonishing prostration of reason, judgment, sense, and experience.

56. The idea of an unseen thing, ever at work around and about us, may afflict the human intellect with idle terrors, but can never guide the human practice to what is rational and consistent with our nature.

57. Our minds being narrow and contracted, we cannot extend our conceptions to the variety and extent of Nature; but imagine that it is as much bounded in its operations as we are in our speculations.

58. Religion, or superstition—for all religions have proved themselves to be superstitions—by destroying the judgment, irrationalized the mental faculties of man, and made him the most abject slave through the fear of nonentities created solely by his disordered imagination.

59. Superstitions, or religions founded on mysteries, miracles, and impostures, rendered it necessary to perpetuate ignorance; and they also created fear, hypocrisy, deception, horrors of the imagination, demons, hobgoblins, spectres, ghosts, and the devil.

60. Hell and the devil are but the emanations of ignorance.

61. Hobbes says, "Religion is a superstition in fashion, and superstition is a religion out of fashion."

62. The superstitions out of fashion are merely contemptible; but the superstition in fashion—holy religion—inasmuch as it forms a heavy limb of the ugly monster, despotism, and is thus dangerous to

mankind, is not only contemptible, but odious and abominable, and to be warred with and destroyed as a moral evil, fatal to liberty and truth.

63. A religion could not have been made without the aid of a phantom. All religions are socially pernicious, on the principle that they form a means of power and oppression—unnatural power, counteracting science and truth.

64. Prejudices arise out of ignorance, and the want of reflection; these are the bases on which the fabric of despotism is founded; and it is the masterpiece of art in tyrants to perpetuate the religious stupidity of a nation, in order to prolong its slavery and their own dominion.

65. The theological scheme was founded upon that kind of awful insinuation which is apt to inspire with fear and astonishment, and to flatter with fantastical excess of hope in regard to things unknown and imaginary. Priests and tyrants sought dominion and wealth; they aimed at making others believe that there existed some person they could not see, who, superintending and ordering all things, gave particular prescripts to them; they depended upon the imbecility of their fellow beings, and the powers of delusion and over-persuasion were their engineery; they obtained tributes and donations, and expected with assurance to be revered and humbly served, in all things commodious, by such as were persuaded they were of a superior rank of beings with more than human talents, but commanding occult divine aid. Hence theological polity.

66. The most successful artifice that celebrated impostors have made use of to avoid provoking the pride of mankind, or seeming to trespass upon their independence, while they were reducing them to slavery, was, to lead the people to ascribe whatever was viewed as excellent and extraordinary in them to some secret communication they had with the gods.

67. The greater part of mankind are naturally apt to be affirmative and dogmatical in their opinions; and while they see objects only on one side, and have no idea of any counterpoising argument, they throw themselves precipitately into the principles to which they are inclined, nor have they any indulgence for those who entertain opposite sentiments. To hesitate, or balance, perplexes their understanding, checks their passion, and suspends their action. They are, therefore, impatient till they escape from a state which to them is so uneasy; and they think that they can never remove themselves far enough from it, by the violence of their affirmations and obstinacy of their belief.

68. People abide by the doctrines they have been bred up in, merely to save themselves the trouble of seeking farther.

69. To acquiesce in the sentiments of others is more convenient for ignorance and indolence, than to examine the grounds of their belief.

70. The passions and prejudices of men prevent them from examin-

ing with candour; and, from their indolence, they are often disgusted with the researches necessary for discovering truth.

71. It is not possible to be wise and just when prejudice and prepossession stir up the angry passions.

72. It is self-conceit that makes men obstinate.

73. Zeal is often in an inverse ratio to knowledge.

74. Unreasonable bigots in policy and religion can listen to no argument but what favours their own prepossessions.

75. Religion has its sacramental associations, fitted for the purposes to which it desires to pledge its votaries.

76. It is the very essence of ignorance to attach importance to what it does not understand. Human vanity is such that the mind becomes irritated by difficulty. In contending for his god, every one, in fact, is only contending for the interests of his own vanity and prejudice, which, of all the passions produced by the malorganization of society, are the most prompt to take alarm, and the most calculated to give birth to great absurdities.

77. It is most difficult to convince a fool, that is, a man of weak understanding, grown obstinate, especially if your arguments seem to thwart or contradict some principle which a parent, tutor, or master, nay, perhaps a nurse maid, has taught him in his childhood.

78. When men obviously forsake the simplest truths of Nature—when they become bigotedly attached to some reigning supposition—what arguments can counteract their obstinacy?—what energy of reason enforce conviction? To point out their absurdities but rivets them in their errors; seriously to confute them is a fruitless labour.

79. It is vain to argue with those who are inveterate in their prejudices; nothing can move the solemn stupidity of those who have been long established in error; the impossibility is often a zest for the belief; “impossible!” cries a priest—and then, taking refuge among the altars of his creed—“dare you say anything is impossible to God?”

80. Hume was justified in saying that “to oppose superstition by an argument as clear as that one and one are two, was to think of stopping the sea with a bulrush.”

81. Let those dream on who think that their own talking qualities, and the incidents of thinking, shall pass the gaol of life. It is not pretended to retrieve their intellects. To assert that the whole family of mankind shall survive their death, in a conscious eternal existence, is among the ravings of credulity. It is only the free and the good who will bear to argue the point; ignorance will never condescend to be instructed, nor stoop to the humility of owning its errors. Hence stupid dogmas, founded by fraud and cunning, grafted on ignorance, shielded by prejudice, and nourished by superstition, are invincible, merely from their inaccessible position in the human mind.

82. The mind of man, by reason of ignorance, is prone to superstition, and fond of the marvellous. The mass of mankind are guided

much more by their passions than by their reason; and, in matters of religion, reason is generally condemned: they are so driven on by superstitious fears, that they dare not examine the foundation of religion.

83. Fear seems to be the principal support of religion: this is excited by the evils and threatening aspect of Nature, the dark and gloomy night, the raging storm, the violent hurricane, the rolling thunder, the darting lightning, the appalling earthquake, &c., the troubles of our condition in life, sorrow for the loss of dear friends, the dread of death, and of an unknown or imaginary future state.

84. The evils which he saw in the universe suggested to man the idea of a divinity. These evils terrified him, but he never perceived the causes, which produced such effects, to exist in Nature. Too ignorant of science to perceive the natural process, he directed his attention to heaven, the imagined residence of agents whose power affected his felicity in this world. From known objects, man judged of unknown. Influenced himself by submission and presents, he employed these to gain the favour of the suppositious divinity. The business, in making these offerings, was confided to certain men, and much ceremony was used on the occasion. The ceremonies became custom, and thus religion and priestcraft were introduced into the world.

85. We find certain phenomena in Nature. We seek a cause, or author. We imagine that we have found him. We afterwards become so enamoured of this offspring of our brain, that we imagine it impossible but he must produce something greater and more perfect than the present scene of things, which is so full of ill and disorder. We forget that this superlative intelligence, and benevolence, and almightiness, are entirely imaginary, and without any foundation in reason or reality. All theological ideas are but chimeras; all the stories of the nature of the gods, of their actions and lives, are but allegories or mythological emblems.

86. The vulgar frequently connect that which is unusual with what is supernatural; they generally commend those things most that they comprehend least; which, nevertheless, they fancy themselves wise enough to understand.

87. The devout adorer of an actual idol can even discover signs of approbation, or the contrary, in the rigid and immovable features of a marble image.

88. A gaping admiration for an idol tolerates no doubt nor objection on any side. A spell is felt in pronouncing a single word, of the meaning of which people are ignorant. "Selah."

89. "All men," it is said, "believe in the existence of a deity, and the voice of Nature is alone sufficient to establish it: it is an innate idea." But what proves that idea to be acquired, is the nature of the opinion, which varies from age to age, and from nation to nation. That it is unfounded, is evident from this, that men have advanced those sciences which have a real object, while that of God has

been always about in the same state. There is no subject upon which men have entertained such a variety of opinions. The ideas of God and his qualities are only founded upon the opinions of our fathers, infused into us by education—by habits contracted in infancy, and strengthened by example and authority. Hence the opinion that men are born with an idea of a divinity. We retain those ideas, without ever having reflected upon them.

90. For thousands of years have idle dreamers transmitted to each other the task of meditating on their deity—of discovering his secret paths; God has always been talked of; mankind have cut each other's throats for him, and this fancied great being still continues to be the most unknown, and the most sought after.

91. The primary theology of man made him first fear and worship even the elements, gross and material objects; he then paid his adorations to the presiding agents of the elements, to inferior genii, to heroes, or to men endowed with extraordinary qualities. By continuing to reflect, he thought to simplify things by submitting all to a simple agent; to a spirit; to a universal soul, which puts Nature and its parts into motion. In ascending from cause to cause, mankind have ended by seeing nothing; and it is in the midst of this obscurity that they have placed their god: it is in this dark abyss that their restless imagination is always labouring to form chimeras which will afflict them, until a knowledge of Nature shall dissipate the phantoms which they have always so vainly adored.

92. If the ignorance of Nature gave birth to gods, a knowledge of Nature is calculated to destroy them: a well informed man ceases to be superstitious.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGION THE OFFSPRING OF IGNORANCE AND FEAR—MANKIND PRONE TO BE CREDULOUS—RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES PRECLUDE REASON—DESPOTISM SUSTAINED BY RELIGION—FALSITY OF REVELATIONS, MIRACLES, AND PROPHECIES.

1. Any of the human affections may lead to the notion of invisible, intelligent power—hope as well as fear, gratitude as well as affliction; but men are much oftener thrown on their knees by the melancholy than by the agreeable passions. Prosperity is easily received as our due, and few questions are asked concerning its cause or author; but every disastrous accident alarms us, and sets us on inquiries concerning the principles whence it arose: we begin to think of the unknown, unseen regions; apprehensions spring up with regard to futurity; and the mind, sunk into diffidence, terror, and melancholy, has recourse to every method of appeasing those secret intelligent powers on whom one's fortune is supposed entirely to depend.

2. While we abandon ourselves to the undisciplined suggestions of our timid and anxious hearts, every kind of barbarity is ascribed to the dread being of our fancy, from the terrors with which we are agitated. Priests foster and encourage these depraved ideas. The more tremendous the divinity is represented, the more tame and submissive do men become to its ministers; and the more unaccountable the measures of acceptance required by them, the more necessary does it become to abandon our natural reason and yield to their ghostly guidance and direction.

3. Many popular religions are really, in the conception of their more vulgar votaries, a species of tyranny suffered under an atrocious and cruel divinity. But among more exalted religionists, the opinion itself often contracts a kind of falsehood, and belies the inward sentiment. The heart secretly detests such measures of cruel and implacable vengeance, though the judgment dares not but pronounce them perfect and adorable; and the additional misery of this inward struggle aggravates all the other terrors by which these unhappy victims to superstition are for ever haunted.

4. Notwithstanding the dogmatical, imperious style of all superstition, the conviction of the religionists, in all ages, is more affected than real, and scarce ever approaches to that solid belief and persuasion which governs us in the common affairs of life. Men dare not avow, even to their own hearts, the doubts which they entertain; they make a merit of implicit faith, and disguise to themselves their real infidelity by the strongest asseverations and most positive bigotry. The usual course of men's conduct belies their words, and shows that the assent, in these matters, is some unaccountable operation of the mind, between disbelief and conviction, but approaching much nearer the former than the latter. Men always agree with themselves and others in demonstrative truths. In any situation, except that of insanity or superstitious folly, every one knows that two and two make four; that justice is a benefit; that benevolence is necessary to merit the affections of men; that injustice and cruelty are incompatible with goodness. Are they thus agreed when they speak of God? Whatever they think or say of him is immediately destroyed by the effects they attribute to him. All theologians, in painting God, paint to us only a great chimera, in whose features they never agree.

5. The credit we give to the testimony of another is very different from the persuasion of our own minds, and has been confounded with it only to serve the purposes of artful men in imposing on the ignorant.

6. The stupid indolence which takes possession of the generality of men, seems to intimate that they are nothing but machines endowed with animal functions, whose instinct never occupies itself beyond the present moment. We make use of our own understanding in the same way as we use our bodies; both are frequently abandoned to quacks, whose chief concern is to get possession of our money.

7. Few men are capable of profound and constant meditation. There are few who have seriously asked themselves what they understand by God; and even fewer can be found who have made a problem of the existence of divinity. Yet conviction supposes evidence, which can alone produce certainty. Who are the men that are convinced of God's existence? Entire nations worship God upon the authority of their fathers and their priests. Confidence, authority, and habit stand in the stead of conviction and proof. All rests upon authority; reason and investigation are universally prohibited. The phantom of the mind is so wrapped up in gloom, terror, and consequence, that it is approached, in thought, with awe and trembling. Men are taught to think it damnable to doubt, for a moment, its existence. The reasoning powers are incapable of investigation, because they are absorbed by superstition, impressed on the ignorance of youth, matured by precept and example, and confirmed by surrounding bigotry.

8. Men prostrate themselves and pray, because their fathers did

so. Their guides and rulers first taught them it was a duty: "Believe and worship," said they, "gods which you cannot comprehend. Rely on our profound wisdom. We know more than you concerning the deity." "But why should I rely on you?" "Because it is the will of God, and you will be punished if you dare to resist." Thus men have always been satisfied with this vicious circle; the indolence of their minds led them to believe that the shorter mode was to rely upon the opinion of others. All religious notions are founded upon authority alone; all the religions of the world forbid investigation, and will not permit reasoning.

9. "But God has spoken, and made himself known to man." When, and to whom? Where are these divine oracles? Absurd and contradictory collections are shown, where the god of wisdom speaks an obscure, insidious, and foolish language; the god of benevolence is cruel and sanguinary; the god of justice is unjust, partial, and ordains iniquity; the god of mercy decrees the most horrid punishment to the victims of his wrath. God is made to say, solely, that "he is what he is;" that he is a "hidden god;" that his "ways are past finding out;" that he is exasperated against every one who has the temerity to investigate his secrets, or consult reason in judging of him or his works.

10. These tales have been written by fools, commented upon by simpletons, taught by knaves, and given to children to be learned by rote; yet the sage is called a blasphemer, because he becomes indignant, and is irritated at the most abominable fooleries that ever disgraced human nature.

11. Every revealed religion is filled with mysterious dogmas, unintelligible principles, incredible wonders, astonishing recitals, which appear to have been invented solely to confound reason. Every religion announces a hidden god, whose essence is mystery; who is particularly good to his favourite people, but the enemy of all others. The deity has never been made to speak only in an enigmatical and mysterious manner; he has every where revealed himself only to announce mysteries; that is, to inform mortals that he intended they should believe contradictions, impossibilities, and things to which they were incapable of affixing any clear ideas. The vulgar ask no better than to listen to fables; priests and legislators, by inventing religions and forging mysteries, have served them to their taste. They have thereby attached to themselves enthusiasts, women, and fools, who are easily satisfied with reasons which they are incapable of examining. Every pretended revelation evidently announces injustice, partiality, and malignity.

12. New faiths easily take root among the ignorant, and the latter are by no means unwilling to become either the apostles or the prophets of doctrines which they cannot possibly understand.

13. Religious impostors have been aided greatly by hysterical and vaporish women, who, besides, desire nothing better than to attract

notice and display their importance by lending themselves to the establishment of any religious vagary.

14. Religion displayed herself, her eyes bound round with a sacred bandage; and quickly she was surrounded by the stupid multitude, who listen with mouths agape, and staring with amazement, to the marvellous tales so eagerly sought after—wonders that make the greater impression in proportion as they are less comprehended.

15. All supernatural and miraculous relations are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or if a civilized people have ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who transmitted them with that inviolable sanction and authority which always attend received opinions. When we peruse the first histories of all nations, we are apt to imagine ourselves transported into some new world, where the whole frame of Nature was disjointed, and every operation was performed in a different manner from the present. Prodigies, omens, oracles, judgments, quite obscure the few natural events that are intermingled with them. But, as the former grow thinner in every page, in proportion as we advance nearer the enlightened ages of science and knowledge, we soon learn that there is nothing mysterious or supernatural in the case, but that all proceeds from the usual propensity of mankind towards the marvellous; and that, though this inclination may at intervals receive a check from sense and learning, it can never be thoroughly extirpated from human nature.

16. The accounts of things which flow from distant tradition, are well known to be the most glaringly absurd, and to bring scarcely a glimmering of truth to remote descendants.

17. Traditions vanish; monuments moulder to dust; fable is substituted for history; the time gone by becomes the age of wonder and mysteries; the time present remains the age of admiration and credulity: emblems become dogmas, of which even the absurdities must be respected.

18. In proportion as the range of our observation is enlarged, and we learn to connect and arrange the phenomena of Nature, we curtail our list of miracles, and the number of our supernatural agents.

19. The passion of surprise and wonder, arising from miracles, being an agreeable emotion, gives a sensible tendency towards the belief of those events from which it is derived.

20. When admiration occupies the mind of man it excludes all examination, and, generating the habit of adopting other men's ideas, it loses all power to form any of its own.

21. If the spirit of religion join itself to the love of wonder, there is an end of common sense; and human testimony, in these circumstances loses all pretensions to authority. A religionist may be an enthusiast, and imagine he sees what has no reality; he may know his narration to be false, and yet persevere in it, with the best intentions, for the sake of promoting so holy a cause; or, even when

this delusion has no place, vanity, excited by so strong a temptation, operates on him more powerfully than on the rest of mankind in any other circumstances, and self-interest with equal force. His auditors may not have, and commonly have not, sufficient judgment to canvass his evidence: what judgment they have, they renounce by principle, in these sublime and mysterious subjects; or, if they were ever so willing to employ it, passion and a heated imagination disturb the regularity of its operations. Their credulity increases his impudence, and his impudence overpowers their credulity.

22. What greater temptation than to appear a missionary, a prophet, an ambassador from heaven? Who would not encounter many dangers and difficulties, in order to attain so sublime a character? Or if a man has made a convert of himself, and entered seriously into the delusion, who ever scruples to make use of pious frauds, in support of so holy and meritorious a cause?

23. Martyrdom proves not even the sincerity and enthusiasm of the martyr; for some have fled from martyrdom whom shame has brought back to the stake in order to recover a lost reputation. Notoriously vicious men have become martyrs from the superstitious belief that they thus became purged of all crime, and obtained an immediate passport to immortality. All that it proves is, that the feelings of men and women may be excited to any pitch, and by almost any means.

24. No wonder that the ignorant are seduced to yield their belief in miracles, by the appearance of verity in the relations of persons who pretend and affirm they have witnessed such.

25. In all matters that concern us as human beings, two things are required: if they relate to the present, that they be physically true; if they relate to the past, that they be historically true: and it may be received as the most solid of truths, that what is not physically true, for the present, has no historical truth as to the past; and whatever now seems difficult to be believed, in its relations to physics, is satisfactorily cleared up as fabulous, by its defect in history.

26. Whenever we entertain ourselves with the transactions of the past times, never should we enter upon them, but with the firmest persuasion that the incidents which glaringly contradict the established order of Nature, are but the dreams and erroneous narrations of men involved in barbarism and obscurity.

27. What is a miracle? A thing believed in by all present generations, and which was never witnessed by any past generation. A miracle would be contrary to the operations of Nature; and Nature proceeding in a course that is eternal and immutable, therefore, miracles are impossible.

28. Priests would uphold their cheats by imposing on us their pretended miracles; that is, violations of Nature; but they are interested in so eminent a degree as to be prime confederates in the deception, and they and their stories do not deserve a moment's consideration: but we are told by their vicious defenders (for they cannot be so

stupid as to believe what they affirm) that these men were unimpeachable evidence, for they brought on themselves envy, hatred, torture, and death, for nothing—for no assignable motive, unless confidence in the truths they uttered. Is it nothing to be thought the chosen servants of God, through whom are transmitted his decrees, favours, and vengeance, and thus rule despotically the minds of believers? The opinion of Bacon might enlighten those gentlemen of such simplicity, quite ignorant that lies can be uttered to attain glory and control, and continued through fear of infamy, or hopes of additional power. “The commandment,” he says, “of the belief and understanding of men, is so extreme a pleasure, and is so transporting, that prophets and impostors, when once they have tasted the superiority over the faith and consciences of men, no torture or persecution can make them abandon it.”

29. After the ambition of conquerors who have committed such atrocious crimes against mankind, perhaps none is so much to be feared as that of men who aspire to domineer over us, in the name, and under the cover, of supposed supreme power.

30. As all knowledge is nothing but a calculation of the balance of probabilities, upon the scale of actual or eventual experience, brought to the test of sensation, prediction would be impossible without the aid of experience; and all revelation of future events is a downright contradiction or impossibility in the language of reason, because it determines uncertainty to be certitude, and futurity to be the present time.

31. The doubtful phrase of prophets has been proverbial; ambiguous or obscure terms give them a latitude of interpretation, though this is unnecessary, for when they are a little precise, and the foreboding fails, priests magnify it as advantageous, calling it “growing evidence,” and they affirm, with well affected horror, the tremendous impiety of questioning what they term “the word of God.”

32. Should a prophecy in the lottery of events be accomplished, they cry out “this is proof of inspiration;” and many acquiesce in this insult to their understandings, not being aware of the many prophecies fulfilled which none have attributed to a divine spirit.

33. Our superstitions decrease as our attainments multiply; and religious fervour declines as we draw nearer to the conclusion, which destroys it entirely. That conclusion, based upon accumulated facts, is, that matter alone is at once the thing acting, and the thing acted upon—eternal in duration—infinately various in appearance—never diminishing in quantity. It will be impossible for a well-informed person to shun this conclusion.

34. It suits very well the loose and gross ideas of the vulgar, to personify the natural powers of existence, and call it god; but men of deeper reflection consider the universe but as an infinite machine which has existed, and will exist, eternally.

35. Whoever has formed true ideas of the ignorance, credulity, negligence, and stupidity of the vulgar, will suspect opinions the more

as he finds them generally established. Men, for the most part, examine nothing; they blindly submit to custom and authority; their religious opinions, above all others, are those which they have the least courage and capacity to examine: as they comprehend nothing about them, they are forced to be silent. Ask any man among the vulgar, whether he believes in a god? He will be much surprised that you can doubt it. Ask him again, what he understands by the word *god*? You throw him into the greatest embarrassment; you will perceive that he is incapable of fixing any real idea to this word he so awfully and superstitiously repeats. He will tell you that god is god; and you will see he neither knows what he thinks of it, nor his motive for believing it.

36. Religion is a mere castle in the air. Theology is but the ignorance of natural causes reduced to a system. The name of the hero, exciting awe, is only a vague word without ideas or qualities affixed to it, except such as are contradicted by facts, or evidently inconsistent with one another. Our notions of this word, god, would be a matter of indifference, if it did not cause innumerable crimes in the world.

37. Belief in deity being the main foundation of all superstition, it has been enabled to maintain itself with greatest force, because of the imposing appearance of sublimity which is attached to it.

38. If nothing were requisite, to establish any popular system, but exposing the absurdities of other systems, every votary of every superstition could give a sufficient reason for his blind and bigoted attachment to the notions in which he has been educated.

“ This side to-day, to-morrow t’other burns,
And they’re all gods almighty in their turns!”

39. All religions appear monstrously absurd except to their respective votaries. The partisans of the different sects think each other very ridiculous and foolish; the mysteries most revered in one religion are objects of derision to another. To a man of sense, nothing appears more ridiculous than the opinions which those who belong to the different religions, with equal folly entertain of each other.

40. Liberality of sentiment is scarcely consistent with an establishment of religion, for the fundamental article of them all is, the belief of their own especial excellence. Not satisfied with the gratification yielded by their notions to themselves, the religious become zealous for subduing all opposition to their creeds; they assume power, and infringe on liberty of sentiment by violating the civil rights of man.

41. It is only when men are not influenced by the slavery of religious fear, which makes them afraid to think, that we can hope to maintain and enjoy our liberties.

42. Freedom of religious opinion brings on freedom of political creed.

43. In the destruction of mental freedom that of all other freedom is involved.

44. The institutions of exclusive privileges, which take place in consequence of ignorance, are the generative roots of moral evil and abused rights.

45. Experience seems to prove that the general tendency of religious societies and establishments is to perpetuate error.

46. From its commencement, the history of the church is a bloody spectacle of crimes committed against humanity.

47. To all tyrants it appeareth desirable to subject the liberty to express opinion to the regulation and control of human laws.

48. Superstition is only to be feared when princes and soldiers rally round her standard: then she becomes cruel and sanguinary.

49. Such is the domineering influence of superstition, in its moral light, it stifles every feeling of humanity; by a sort of spell, it fascinates the powers of reason, and to barbarity and the worst excesses that can be imagined, it gives the name of obedience to the divine will and performance of religious duty.

50. In all countries where freedom of conscience in matters of religion is partially allowed and miserably understood, it is no matter of wonder that alarm should be felt at the progress which unbelief is making. Protestantism was the dawn of reason and liberty; it is the first effect which is manifested of that progressive action in the human mind, of which free inquiry is the spring, and a disbelief in God the upshot. From massacre and ruin the protestants raised their structure, and laid down the foundation stone of general atheism, and of the universal freedom of man.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION; ITS ORIGIN AND PROGRESS; ATROCIOUS MEANS OF SUSTAINING IT AGAINST THE FORCE OF REASON BY CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST HUMANITY; ITS BANEFUL TRIUMPH OVER FREEDOM AND SCIENCE; ARTIFICES OF THE CLERGY TO UPHOLD ITS INFLUENCE—CORRUPTED PHILOSOPHY AND FALSE MORALITY OF THE SCHOOLS—PERVERTED MODES OF EDUCATION.

1. Even at the present day, the influence of an order of men, whose office is to inspire the ignorant with a "veneration" for mere forms and ceremonies, or for scriptures which it is impossible to comprehend, is such, that much virtue and moral resolution is requisite in speaking of the rights of reason. The virtuous and free are held up to contempt and ridicule; vice is triumphant; and the vicious and unprincipled are everywhere flattered and enriched: faith, with its ministers, assumes the most audacious pre-eminence.

2. How long have the enlightened members of society yet to endure the frowns of ignorance; to feel themselves regarded with the violent malignity of folly and superstition? How long will the greater deference continue to be paid to men in proportion as they propagate absurdities?

3. Christianity being the religion, or mythological barbarism, now in vogue, popular opinion is prejudiced against reason, free inquiry, &c. Brand a man with the name of "*infidel*," and he is immediately held up to the vulgar as an object of aversion; shunned by the bigoted and illiterate; and considered as dangerous to the rising generation, who are less affected by prejudice than their parents.

4. When Constantine ordered that the hierarchy should assume the name of Christ, we are not to consider him as forming a new weapon of destruction; he only changed a name which had grown into disrepute and would serve his purpose no longer, for one that was gaining an extensive reputation: a most consummate hypocrite and tyrant adopted the prevailing infatuation and made it the religion of the State, to serve his purpose of enslaving mankind. Its adoption was a fine stroke of policy suggested by the folly with which the people were running into it.

5. The old religion of the Roman empire was gradually lost in the religion of Jesus; and from the wreck of doctrines professed by the oriental sects, were collected and fabricated, a history, a ritual, and creed, to which the fanatics united themselves. The oppressed and unfortunate of the conquered nations, ignorant and weak, attached themselves to the new religion, because the interests of the ruling priests dictated to them a patient endurance of exactions, toils, and privations, with a renunciation of wealth, honours, and pleasures, to be compensated in a pretended future life of interminable felicity.

6. According to church history, the decree of a politic tyrant decided the priests of the superstition till then prevalent, and faith in the sacred dogmas of which had till then been enforced, to yield to the overwhelming current of a new order of fanaticism which set against them with a force of enthusiasm that seemed irresistible. Retaining the frocks of their former ministry, they converted their temples, and transferred the source of their emoluments, so as to derive from Christianity, by means of the increased impulse given to credulity, a possession of revenues and power, such as they had never aimed at before. They conceived the design of perpetuating the edifice of their authority, by placing it on a foundation the most imposing. They met in council, and devised the institution of an exalted church, the priesthood of which should exercise a sway to be extended over the remotest regions. They perceived the expediency of a written authority, and, collecting together the documents relating to the traditions of the Hebrews and the notions taught by the eastern sects, with the tales, besides, of miracles and rhapsodies, that were provided for, and in request among, the sect of fanatics whose name they had assumed, they allotted the pieces which were to compose their holy scriptures—their sacred writings—the Christian Bible. Natural and eternal existence this book ascribes to creation, within a very few thousand years past, by a feigned powerful individual—a Nature contriving magician reigning in an imagined heaven, whose will is described as operating in a variety of arbitrary and capricious acts. Our diminutive globe is represented as the main object in the creation; and the uncomprehended infinity, the suns and planets pervading the endless expanse of the universe, merely serve as appendages for furnishing light to this insignificant earth. As illusion is the object of the fable, the weakness of man's conceit is entertained by picturing him as made in the likeness of this great invisible nothing, and referring all this heavenly and earthly affair of creation for his particular use. It being necessary to make the fable conform to the condition of Nature in some respects, the sexual individualities, and the generative properties by which the eternal races of unlimited and necessary existences are maintained, produced the idea of woman being created, and of the command to increase and multiply. Woman is tempted by a most wise serpent to eat a fruit forbidden to be touched in the garden prepared for man's residence, and she tempts her companion to commit the same offence; and their feigned creator be-

comes enraged, expels them from their garden, pronounces the fallen state of all their race, curses the earth, and originates the principle of pain, misery, and death: this last article of the fable was also made necessary by the existence of conditions in the natural state of man which do not exempt him from these evils. The fabled creator, in the course of time, becomes disgusted with his own handy works, and drowns all the nations of the earth and all animals, except one human pair and their children, who construct a huge boat into which couples of Nature's existences are compelled to enter, and the whole float until the subsiding of the waters. From this stock is said to originate the present orders on the face of our globe. The fables in repute among a savage horde of Tartars, from which the foregoing account is derived, and which have been adopted as divine by our forefathers, and even in this country are still preached up as the sources of truth, go on to narrate the partiality of this barbarous god for themselves, and the narrative of their traditions details scenes of atrocity and shame at once horrible and revolting. The dispensation of particular rules and ceremonies for his worship—the fashion of an idolatrous box or object to be regarded with awe, as containing the holy of holies—the institution of an order of priests—the forcible occupation of a promised land, and the slaughter of its former population—the compositions of their psalmists and prophets—now “the Lord awaketh as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine, he smiteth his enemies in the hinder parts; he puts them to a perpetual reproach”—he “scatters the dirt” from his filthy shoes over a brave people who successfully oppose the invasions of his rapacious well-beloved—he “will empty his wash-pot” upon the heads of another brave people whose prowess in resisting their aggressions inspired the chosen of the Lord with poltroonery—these are the coarse and vulgar figures, indicating at once the attainments and character of the people from whom we received our superstitions. Then comes the incarnation: the Jewish god makes a descent upon earth in person—becomes god-man—sacrifices himself to himself in order to redeem a few—always a preferred portion, his elect—to reign with himself in glory. To accomplish this operation, the magical god contrives to breed himself into his own son—conjures himself into the womb of a man's wife—is brought forth a babe, and leaves his mother a virgin, and her husband no cuckold: god in the flesh is tempted by a feigned devil, or spirit of evil—in correct language, the young man becomes lunatic—he frees himself from parental restraints—forsakes his trade of a carpenter—ranges through the country as a fanatical itinerant, arrayed in a seamless garment, to attract the vulgar notice. Superhuman powers are attributed to him by his ignorant and infatuated followers; miracles are wrought, some of them pretty droll; and the last miracle is that of his rising again from the death he suffered. The jugglery of breathing upon his disciples the holy ghost, and conferring upon them powers of working miracles, precedes the flight of this pretended god

to feigned abodes on high. The historians of the age being silent on the subject of this pretended revelation of God by himself to man, these accounts may be supposed to have been fabricated to suit the taste of the earlier fanatics, and furnish illusion for feeding the credulity of ignorant people made subservient to the purposes of priests. The poor simple man, thus deified, if, indeed, his existence were more than fabulous, must have figured somewhat in similar style to the modern mother of shiloh, though her connexion with divinity has not been acknowledged by an equal number of fools. At the last scene, comes an apolyptical, or unveiling, or uncovering visionary, who presents startling figures of death mounted on a pale horse in the clouds; vials of wrath cast abroad over the earth; horrors! horrors! horrors! desolation! woe! misery! And, to crown all with an astounding climax, a terrific angel is heard to announce by means of a trumpet, the impossible dilemma, that time shall be no more!

7. Thus falls the curtain upon this appalling farce of heavenly phantasmagoria—leaving a stupor, dismay, and spell upon the human intellect, from the effect of which it has not been allowed to recover.

8. This is the silly and contemptible fable of which mankind have for ages accustomed themselves to be the dupes.

9. Disregarding the source to be derived from their reason for reconciling them to, and enabling them to bear, the portion of suffering inseparable from humanity; setting themselves in opposition to every conviction and sense of their mode and term of existence proclaimed to them by the voice of Nature; narrowing their views to a finite, god-comprehended sphere, and involving themselves in darkness and terror from fancying themselves relations with a “terrible god”—they have loaded their imaginations with a woful weight oppressing them from above, and yielded themselves willing subjects to an order of men who have fully availed themselves of their power to support themselves in splendour and ease at the expense of the people.

10. An excited, perhaps a frenzied enthusiast, a wretched man, deified by Jewish fanatics, is the object worshipped by modern Christians, who affect, at the same time, to despise the incarnations of gods adored by other eastern superstitionists.

11. The clothing divinity with humanity—god in the flesh—furnished a sensible object of adoration, and was convenient for attracting the devotion of the many.

12. When Christianity became powerful, it had to defend itself against the attacks of philosophy: it feared the spirit of investigation and doubt, and that confidence of man in his own reason and energies—the pest alike of all religious creeds. It armed itself with the bloody zeal of intolerance, and devoting to destruction all who did not blindly swallow its sacred dogmas, fictions, and contradictions, its triumph was the main cause of the extinction of both reason and science.

13. As soon as the Christian religion came to make its way in the world—to be established in governments and endowed with lands,

benefices, jurisdictions, and other temporal emoluments, certain reasoners began to attack the church; upon which the councils of priests, alarmed for their temporal estates, power, and dominion, convened together, and put every text of scripture on the rack to confess articles of faith and practice, of such extraordinary nature as the light of reason could never have dictated, and which were directly contrary to whatever its logic could ever have submitted to—propagation of the gospel by the arguments of fire and sword.

14. The anathemas of the fathers, at first gentle, became, at length, when supported by tyranny, like the sting of the scorpion.

15. Once accustomed to be glutted by the blood of the infidel, the thirst of it seems to increase with age. The grand inquisitor of Philip II. of Spain, when ninety years old, allowed his solitude to be broken by those only who answered his inquiries “if there were any opinions to punish?” He called Philip to account for the death of an offender, because the inquisition should have been the instrument of his destruction, and he regretted the victim because he had been deprived of his right to sacrifice him. The old Christian was desired to possess the monarch with a faith equal to counteract the horror he might suffer for murdering his son, and replied, “To appease the eternal justice, the son of God died on the cross.”

16. No human depravity can equal revenge and cruelty, covered with the mantle of religion. If ignorance be the parent of superstition, it is no less the origin of cruelty. From the powerful influence of instruction, or civilization, the bigot will become rational and the barbarian humane.

17. The unmeaning words, infidel, impiety, heresy, and heterodoxy, were invented by priests; and these pretended crimes have been punished with the greatest barbarities.

18. The effect of dread is such, that when tyranny perpetrates its shocking acts of cruel oppression, the people become intimidated, and join in exclaiming against the person and the offence of the persecuted by reason of fear for their own safety; though such an offence given to despotism might have been a noble assertion of right—and the public thus sink into the low condition of being the base and abject instruments of their tyrannical and religious rulers, and are ever ready to lend a hand in enforcing their will: it is as difficult to redeem a people from habitual degradation, as it was easy to suffer themselves to be reduced to such a state.

19. The heaviest shackle that was ever forged for the purpose of fettering the intellect of mankind was that contrived by the church of Christ—the training the people to regard the artificial names of atheism, blasphemy, and infidelity, with the same fearful horror as that with which royalty accustoms them to dread the consequences of disloyalty: they thus prohibited the exercise of reason by the weight of the punishment annexed to that construed crime.

20. When Christianity had got a solid footing, it acted like a canker worm to every thing rational and useful to mankind.

21. Designing preachers clothed themselves with a sanctified, imposing, external garb of humility and personal debasement; they put on a devout appearance, and, keeping a steady eye on this world, they talked of nothing but the kingdom of heaven, spiritual beings, and the world to come. Having made themselves masters of heaven, they made a bold push towards obtaining full possession of the earth, and, in all humility, endeavoured to reign paramount over all. Such was the power which they usurped over men, and such their intolerable pride and mode of exercising it, that we look back on their transactions with wonder, contemplate them with terror and indignation, and tremble to think that such terrible and degrading dramas may be acted over again even in our own times.

22. Such were the base equivocations of the church doctrine, or canonical code, that the virtuous and innocent only suffered in order that the wicked might act with impunity against reason, truth, and humanity. Every thing which soaring ambition, daring pride, and voracious avarice, could propose; every thing that brazen impudence could achieve, cunning invent, or skilful deception carry into practice, has been done by priestcraft, to keep the human mind in bondage and fearful subjection.

23. Of the frame and bent of the clerical mind, the word *heretic* involves evidence which reaches not the head only but the heart. The early church used the Greek language, and the word *heretic* signifies choice. There was the consummation of the clerical dominion! when it became execrable to make, and he became execrated who did make a choice; that is, when the clergy might dictate whatever the people were to choose. Their power was thenceforward limited only by their will.

24. Faith was then made law.

25. Haughty and artful priests dictated the measures to be pursued for strengthening and confirming the edifice of the church.

26. Monarchs themselves were compelled to bend before the fearful priest, and succeeded to their thrones but by episcopal anointment; and since then, religion has been the engine for establishing the usurpation of an oppressive superstition over the human race.

27. The cross was adopted as the symbol of religious empire, because its venerable antiquity and pagan origin gave it an interest in the estimation of those accustomed to wear it suspended at their bosoms as an amulet to drive away evil, and because it was fitted to the credulity of the vulgar.

28. Temples of massive architecture were erected as calculated for reverberating the declamations of the whining or ranting missionary, and rendering his sounds operative upon the nervous excitability, rather than submitted to the reason of the people.

29. Lofty towers and steeples were elevated, in which were placed heavy bells, by the deep toned and sonorous tolling of which the people's attendance was required, and woe to him who, by repeated absence, showed his neglect of the noisy admonition.

30. The fine arts were dragged in to serve as the accessories of the delusion. Painting and sculpture were employed to dazzle the imagination; and music of imposing and melancholy expression, was made to affect the more sensitive passions.

31. The choir and chant admitted the congregated populace to join their voices in the church service, and furnished to the vanity of every one, however discordant his voice, a scope for attributing to his own lungs, whatever of melody was heard in the chorus; and thus engaged his more willing and subservient attendance by identifying him as one of the performers in executing the church mummeries.

32. In accordance with the plan to appropriate all that was of "good report" to itself, the church resorted to artifice in perverting the respectable name of philosophy to a use suited to their ends. Contending against the lights of reason and common sense, they were obliged to seek the succour of sophistry. By aid of a spurious kind of metaphysics, they succeeded in turning the mind astray from Nature, and entangling it with difficulties. They had recourse to verbosity to puzzle and perplex the clearest points; they seduced the student from the direct road of common sense, to delude his imagination in the fairy land of metaphor; they spun their arguments to a degree of tenuity neither tangible nor visible—which, under the name of perfection of reason, excluded reason altogether—that they might excite the awe which is always felt for the incomprehensible by the ignorant, and, at the same time, elude the refutation of the learned and the wise, they bestowed art and labour in proportion to the weakness of their cause; they assumed the air of wisdom, to impose on the multitude, and uttered the language of knavery and folly with the grave confidence of an oracle—

"For science uttering jangling words obscure,
Where frightened reason never yet could dwell."

Elaborate fabricators of what have been erroneously esteemed unquestionable standards of refinement, they intentionally imposed upon the senses of mankind, with incomprehensible metaphysics, in which numberless theses, cases, and arguments were made to commence and terminate in absolute obscurity.

33. In dressing up this empirical philosophy, they contrived to give realities a cast of poetical piety; dressed up the sciences in a devout trim; mingled with every description some pious lines of aspiration, referring every thing to divinity: and thus they swaddle astronomy, chemistry, &c. in bandages of tight alliance with their own views. Works made up of a mixture of natural history and exclamations of admiration and praise of a creator are found everywhere.

34. Thus they defaced the fair figure of philosophy; that is, the investigation of the true and the useful on all subjects—the adoption of eternal and immutable truth; and palmed upon men in its stead,

a thing enveloped in shadows and involving the intellect in all obscurity and derangement.

35. A multiplicity of doctrinal and jargonal books were written; and to load the mind with the keys to this labyrinth was termed erudition. A mass of sacred nonsense was called divinity. Adroitness in conducting the controversies resulting from the different constructions given to inconsistencies, was made a science, and designated by the word Polemics. Heavy, stupifying dissertations on notions, totally unconnected with Nature, contained the system of theology, credence to which was made imperative. The title of Doctor was given to the learned in this trash, and professorships were created for them in the schools, where they exercised authority over the mind of the student, and laboured to mystify his intellect.

36. Tyranny has long been maintained by binding down the reason of mankind with the imperative mandates of a vile superstition which made it death to entertain prohibited opinions. When credence was no longer yielded to so shocking an absurdity as the existence of an obligation to believe what was prescribed, the next artifice was to delude, by a controlled education, the judgment which it was impossible longer to compel by the terrors of the scaffold or the stake. In Europe this system has been eminently successful. By controlling the opinions of the pupils at the public schools, the attention of the people has been diverted from the prosecution of those studies which would lead to a discovery of their rights. By dignifying with the name of learning, those acquirements exclusively which are useless or mischievous to mankind—by holding up to ridicule and contempt all generous enthusiasm for the welfare of the world—and by reserving the honours of their academies, and the bounties of their treasuries, for those only distinguished for the showy and ostentatious products of imaginative talent, useless erudition, or unserviceable knowledge, the objects of their artifice have been convinced that the subjects most deserving of intellectual regard, were those which are selfish in their purposes, limited in their uses, and debasing in their influences.

37. This sort of education, consisting of the crude compound of servile habits, absurd dogmas, canonical formularies, pernicious maxims, mystic morality, and futile studies, is the prolific source of errors and evils. It is the vicious habits contracted in this education, the notions and prejudices with which it envelopes the understanding—prejudices which, substituting the memory for the judgment, allure the mind constantly into false courses of reasoning: a habit which is adopted of suffering ourselves to be beguiled by words, prevents our attending to things.

38. The very means for conveying our conceptions is perverted into a hindrance to our advancement in philosophy. Language is seldom studied as the vehicle of truth, but esteemed for its own sake independent of its connexion with things. Its most serious occupation has been concerning artificial ideas, apart from relations with

things. Unfortunately for us, this has been the means of concealing, in shameful obscurity, the most profound researches, and the sublimest truths. Every lover of truth will only study a language for the purpose of communicating the knowledge of actual science; for since all truth is eternal, its nature can never be altered by transposition, though, by this means, its dress may become less certain and precise.

39. Casuistry and ascetic obligations made up the greater part of the moral philosophy of the schools. By far the most important branch of philosophy thus became the most corrupted. It is well known that nothing is less philosophical than the philosophy of the colleges.

40. The priests contrived to get into their hands the education of youth. Their first concern was to require from their pupils a respect for, and absolute submission to, their dogmas, however absurd they might be, or opposed to liberty and common sense: even to doubt was deemed criminal, and the renunciation of reason and implicit faith was to be regarded as saving grace; confusion and obscurity were to be gazed at with awful solemnity as the profound of heavenly wisdom, and a set of cant phrases were consecrated as the language of Zion. That kind of knowledge was alone imparted which assists in the prostration of the will and understanding, so necessary to make a religious character.

41. Morality was made to consist in combating passions the most natural and often the most useful; or in ridiculous and painful self-denial: to humiliate man by the idea of his imperfection, and hold him in constant dread, every thing was made crime; virtue was made an impossibility in order to discourage him, and deprive him of all energy and independence; the more they sophisticated and denaturalized his ideas, the better they beguiled him aside from the truth, and the firmer they held him bound. A conscience loaded with vain scruples was necessarily more dependent; he who knew not how to use his reason must of course submit to be guided; an imagination intoxicated with spiritual fumes easily became inflamed, and fitted for subserving the ambitious and odious designs of priests who have caused the shedding of such torrents of human blood.

42. That Christian acquiescence—that low degree of humility, which religion imposes, her pastors can adroitly turn to any end which may suit their purpose. It is the casuistical workings of priestcraft—the ceaseless efforts to influence the minds of misguided men, by which they are made the humble and willing tools, prepared either to act as decorated pageants in the grand army, as it is called, in a crusade for political power, or to burn martyrs at the stake, to satisfy the vengeance of religious bigotry and mad zeal.

43. Artful hypocrites, by virtue of their office of religious instructors, pretended to be the teachers of morality also, that they might obtain secular power, and govern the world by moulding the duties of men, and by fashioning ethics into such a form as would best suit their ends.

44. When moral and natural philosophy came to be taught only as subservient to theology, the duties of human life were treated as chiefly subservient to the happiness of a life to come.

45. Blindness was made to pervade the science of morality. Instead of forming it upon the nature of man, and the relations which subsist between him and his fellows, or upon the duties resulting from those relations, religion established imaginary relations between man and feigned invisible beings. The gods, always painted as tyrants, became the models of human conduct. When man injured his neighbour, he thought he had offended his god, and believed he could pacify him by humiliations, and by making presents to his priests. Religion corrupted morality, and the expiations of piety completed its destruction.

46. Bid man hate and despise himself, and you take away the strongest motives to virtue. Melancholy and discontented devotees, finding the objects of human desire incapable of satisfying their hearts, decried all human gratifications as pernicious and abominable.

47. The Christians commit the despicable crime of decrying, traducing, and vilifying human nature; designating the human race by the worst epithets, and regarding mankind, at least by their language, as the production of an undetermined or doating god, who made man to wreak his unappeasable wrath upon him.

48. The pulpit is the organ by which the senses are stupified, reason is slandered, and morality abused. Morality, which alone can furnish a security and satisfaction, to be enjoyed by the just rights of innocence and usefulness, is pointed out as a dry, sterile, and soul-damning reliance. "Carnal reason" is the stigmatizing cant by which artful and wicked saints defame the only useful practice of human life; indeed, they impiously declare, that "all our righteousness is as filthy rags."

49. The pulpit is also the organ by which the sentiments of rational men are blasphemed, and the ignorant vulgar stimulated to animosities and violence.

50. The clergy expect the people to subscribe to their unreasonable and absurd dogmas, cringe and bow to their mandates, and acknowledge their infallibility, without ever asking the question, "why, or wherefore, is it so?" Whenever they are called upon to show the reasons upon which their opinions are established, they shrink from investigation with an affected air of pious contempt; and, entrenching themselves behind their priestly importance, they show evident marks of displeasure, as if a spirit of inquiry was highly criminal, and an open violation of every principle of gentility and good breeding. These reverend gentlemen, who claim the prerogative of thinking for the rest of the world, would frown into the silence of death, all who have the impudence to think for themselves; and gull the simple and thoughtless into the unqualified belief in their systems of theological jargon and religious trumpery.

51. Whenever a priest obtains from those, who oppose his peculiar

tenets, an acknowledgment of belief in god, revelation, soul, or spirit, he perceives ignorance and error sufficient to allow of his sophistries being used by him with effect; but it is laughable to see the priest's farcical and shuffling air of affected horror and denunciation, whenever he finds himself committed by holding argument with a sensible man who adheres to Nature, and boldly reasons without regard to those fallacious data. Shrinking in guilty terror from the contact of research and truth, he dares not trust himself to defend his narrow mystic nonsense, when any one opposes it on natural grounds. "You believe in a god?" he asks. "No." "Then you are an atheist!" "An infinite universe admits not of a comprehender!" "A world without a god, indeed!" "Yes, priest, infinite natural existence without a god or gods." "You seem to be floundering about woefully in your infinity!" "Yes, priest, and your god is lost in this same woeful predicament." "That is impious, I can speak to you no longer." Knowing the fragility of their fictions, and the firmness of reason when adhering to Nature, the crafty priest inculcates upon his obsequious followers, the duty of avoiding all discourse with the unbeliever in a god, fearful that a spark of the light of truth might kindle in his brain the flame of pure reason, and shed abroad the beam of liberty upon his faculties. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," is the text chosen by the priest to gnash his teeth upon on the occasion. Men are taught to think that nothing reasonable, nothing but what is wicked, can be said against their religion; they are horror struck with the thought of listening to a word, much less reading a book, that would inform them of the truth and remove their prejudices; they are fortified with every priestly defence against the attacks of reason; there is no such thing as coming at them.

52. Those brought up in and still plunged in religious vapours, are ever ready stupidly to declare themselves well pleased to believe as they do, and announce their horror at the idea of thinking differently, because they are bred in conceit for the preference and veneration they give to the notions impressed on them, and because their minds are not sufficiently sensible and courageous to inquire about truth rather than remain in settled prejudice.

53. No matter what creed, Christians, Jews, the devout slaves of all sects, even the deist is esteemed or nearly tolerated; every thing bearing the name of religion, and thus countenancing the thing in some shape, meets with encouragement. The truth is the only thing that cannot now be suffered to be spoken. Universal, uncommenced, everlasting Nature is the only thing, the understanding of which cannot now be tolerated.

54. In clerical language, the wealth and power allied with priestly interests are religion. Be as treacherous, be as dishonest, be as unfeeling and cruel, be as profligate as you please, you may still be religious. But breathe a sentiment that would militate against their interests, make them surmise discredit at your hands, and you are the enemy of religion directly—nay, the enemy of God; and all the mis-

chief which religious prejudice and antipathy—the poisoned, deadly weapon of the clergy—can bring down upon its victims, is invoked, as the sure and necessary consequence of your sacrilegious audacity.

55. When men have lived some time under the immediate tuition of the priests, they are prepared for aristocratical usurpations.

56. The clergy may be considered as a kind of standing army for the support of delusion and despotism; as the members of that community have been, in every nation, the surest supporters of arbitrary power.

57. Every thing which is alluring to the mind of man, in actual power and pleasure, urge and impel the clergy to labour for the suppression of opposition. How steadily they have obeyed this impulse, their history declares. Of their expedients for accomplishing their object, the first and most conspicuous is their application to the magistrate for the powers of persecution, or rather the taking into their own hands the execution of that power.

58. The very existence of religion is scarcely consistent with the enjoyment of a right to laugh at it.

59. The office of the clerical profession is to keep men pious block-heads by stupifying them with the awful notion of a great creator, and preventing the idea of natural truth gaining access to their ideas—the truth that the infinite existence with which they are identified is the passing course of an eternal duration of the like kind.

60. Priests love to talk of rulers in their prayers. Whenever they can, they rule despotically themselves; but the principle of tyranny, by which only they can be sheltered from the attacks of reason, is so inseparable from their profession, that, when it cannot be obtained, they are the cheap instruments of despotism to any who will employ them and avenge their cause.

61. The language of theology hath never conveyed the just and noble sentiment of a genuine patriotism; it hath never said, “Come the commonwealth of equal rights between man and man;” but its eternal heraldry hath been, “Kingdom come,” and “Come the king.” Its precepts have consecrated the assumption of a measureless and irresponsible authority in governors, and required an abject, passive, and unconditional obedience from subjects.

“How terrorless the triumph of the grave!
How powerless were the mightiest monarch’s arm,
Vain his loud threat, and impotent his frown!”

“How ludicrous the priest’s dogmatic roar!
The weight of his exterminating curse,
How light! and his affected charity,
What palpable deceit!—but for thy aid,
Religion! but for thee, prolific fiend,
Who peopled earth with demons, hell with men,
And heaven with slaves!”

62. Royalty nor religion have either of them common sense; they are both fatal to the rightful interests of society, and yet they govern the world.

63. All the past and present institutions of the world, are a proof of the ever changing insanity with which the human mind has been enveloped.

64. All is grimace, all is false, even to the very names that are given to things. Intolerance is called love of God; persecution, holy zeal; alienation of property from our families, devoting it to pious purposes; absurdities, faith; and organized matter, eternal spirit.

65. Why do people suffer themselves to be led away and duped by theologians and such like sharpers?

66. Men are accustomed to follow in the track trodden by the priestled flock, and cannot afterwards disencumber themselves from the habits of that gregarious thing called religion.

67. How can men meanly lend themselves to be the props on which the pride of others establishes itself?

68. How degraded are men by constantly making themselves fools, because others do so! The words "every body does so" seem to stand them instead of reason and conscience!

69. Instead of cowering before the priest, who interestedly and professionally preaches to them, and imposes on their ignorance, a delusive heaven,—why do not men consult their reason, and make their institutions conform to the objects of knowledge, science, truth, morality, and freedom?

70. If we look into the science of theology, we shall irresistibly come to the conclusion, that the main object of it is, to station the human mind, and check the progress of general improvement, in order that a numerous class of men may live at their ease, depending on the imbecility of the rest of the race.

71. Do we not find the human mind every where enslaved under pretence of establishing the empire of religion? Do we not see tyrants arrogating the title of vicegerents of divinity; right reverend fathers in God trampling proudly on the rights of humanity? And yet all these professing and inculcating "veneration for religion?" Are we not surrounded by unprincipled rogues, who assume the mask of sanctity as a cover for their knavery?

72. Machiavel said—"The doctrines of the Christian religion, recommending only passive courage and suffering, have subdued the spirit of mankind, and fitted them for slavery and subjection."

73. The pernicious association of respect and veneration with wealth is instilled under the insinuating influences of theological polity; it is consecrated and riveted by all the solemn sanctions of popular influence, and thus a confirmed persuasion is gradually brought about, that persons exclusively rich, are entitled to the homage of the poor. The reason why wealth has that instrumentality to awe people, and make them obsequious and submissive to the requirements of aristocratical and religious usurpers, is this very association of ideas, respect and wealth, derived by the people from the fawning example set them

by priests whom they see crouching every where before those, who are viewed as the great and rich, and who pay them for their mean obsequiousness.

74. The priest also, imposing a tax upon the generosity of rich professors, procures for himself the honour and the merit of distributing at his pleasure, to some few of the necessitous portion of his flock, a bounty which costs him nothing, and for which he receives grateful thanks dexterously stolen from the real donors.

75. That aristocratico-religious kind of well standing in society, recommended by the world's example, and studied by those who have the ambition to exalt themselves into what is called respectability, and who aim at figuring in that circle who style themselves genteel, by strictly calculating the effects of appearances upon the multitude, exhibits a contemptible character of meanness and base truckling to arrogant and influential opinion; it produces and stickles for reverence towards, and submission to, religious institutions and customs, and prates about acquiescence in the *commands of superiors or rulers*; it imitates the example of others and conforms to established usages; it is the devotee of wealth and power, yields to the fashion of the day, and is punctual in ranking itself amidst the formal throng arrayed at church under the nod of the priest; it is apprehensive, and full of scruples and doubts, and, in many individuals, conduct seems only to be consulted for through fear. Such people are irresolute and faltering while uncertain of the line of proceeding interest and etiquette would dictate; they accommodate themselves to the persons with whom they have to deal; they are cautious to conceal their connection with any who do not move in genteel circles, and are not generally well received; they look all ways at once in the public street, that they may fall in with those it would do them honour to be seen greeting, and they cautiously shun contact with those so unstylish as to make them fear disparagement or disgrace, although an hour before, within doors, they had affected a friendly footing with them; they are consequential, and push themselves forward into notice at all public places, though they contribute no more than others towards the support of such places; they veer about with the flow and ebb of circumstances; they watch the setting of the current, and glide along in the stream of the *ton*; they steer in the track calculated to lead towards aggrandizement or distinction, and they disdain the useful part of the community, whom they are pleased to designate by the opprobrious and insulting expressions, "inferior classes of society," "the plebeian orders." These genteel folks vary as religion, prescription, and forms vary; and their principle is ever shifting itself and fluctuating. These are your gentry of the occasion, your stylish church folks, your estimable and decorous people in outward show, but intensely selfish, unprincipled, and grovelling in reality; of immense impudence and effrontery; hard-hearted, proud worldlings, who know no good but money and pageantry. It is hard to form an adequate idea of the

vain and frivolous minds of those who are intent on nothing but exalting themselves by means of identifying themselves with the credit and power usurped by priests, by whom they are despised, but whose favour they seek with the meanest servility.

76. A really upright, manly, and independent mind will be actuated by an order of good-will entirely superior to the little selfish contrivances of the world ; it will reason for itself, form its own judgment of what is right and wrong, and will not swerve from the principle of rectitude and humanity natural to it on all occasions ; it will not rely for its reputation on the breath of the vulgar, and knows not the toil, lassitude, and emptiness of artificial life. Sterling and well-constituted character is a correct and firm determination of the will to follow the counsels of reason and goodness.

77. Whenever mankind shall be freed from the yoke of religious hypocrisy and pride, then, those who never before had dared to stir disencumbered of the trammels of vulgar opinion, and had measured every movement, studied every gesture, and prepared every look which might chance to have a witness, until it was become impossible to tell how Nature had moulded them, will assume their proper air, carriage, and tone ; and, for the first time, cast away the irksome shackles of formal, artificial, priest-fashioned society, to display their genuine, native, unaffected character.

78. The real actuating force which gives credit to religious formality is vulgar opinion. There cannot be a more effectual spur to this popular sentiment than the formation of a body whose peculiar interest lies in watching its various turns, in kindling it anew, and dexterously diversifying its applications. For this they possess all advantages.

79. If we turn over the pages of history, we shall find that mental oppression commenced by almost insensible means. When marriage was made a religious ceremony, and declared a divine institution, who could expect the results ? By it the clergy interwove their influence into almost all the relations of life.

80. The forced necessity of recurring to the services of the priest, on occasions of births, marriages, and deaths, ensures to them a large measure of respect, as well as of emolument, and this reacts upon the functions which they exercise. They labour sedulously to inculcate the deepest reverence in speaking of religious matters, as well as extreme backwardness and timidity of soul in submitting them to the examination of reason ; prayer for faith is enjoined, and the examination is to result in deciding alone according to the Bible. They diffuse widely among the community those pious misapplications of moral epithets which are inseparably annexed to the belief in an Omnipotent Being, availing themselves of this confusion of language, to stigmatize as iniquitous every thing which counteracts their own views, and to extol as virtuous that which favours them.

81. Adroit villains are cautious not to deprave entirely the simple whom they would render subservient to their ends ; the ascendancy is managed to be kept up by means of their crimes and their remorse

torturing them by turns. Whoever attempts to operate by fears upon an innocent heart does it with a corrupt intent.

82. The religious premium offered for faith tends to corrupt the judgment of individuals, and to foist in, by means of their hopes and partialities, a belief which unbiassed reason would not have tolerated. The penalties denounced against unbelief co-operate most powerfully by enlisting their fears in behalf of the same self-deceit and hypocrisy.

83. When the authority exercised over public opinion has once occasioned a tolerably extensive diffusion of religious practices throughout the community, the censures directed against any small remainder of nonconformists will be embittered by the concurrent action of envy. "I feel myself constrained to be rigidly exact in the renewal of my pious offerings, and the irksome ceremonies imposed by religion; and shall my neighbour, who eludes all share in the burden, be treated with the same consideration and respect as myself who expend so much money, and devote my time and personal attendance so disagreeably in co-operating with the many to support the credit of religious ordinances and formalities, in order to ensure it? Being myself a scrupulous renderer of these services, it becomes my interest to swell the merit of performing them, and heighten the criminality of neglect to the highest possible pitch, in order to create a proportionate distribution of their esteem. The more deeply I can impress this conviction, the greater will be the veneration for me. All these considerations conspire to sharpen my acrimony against my unbelieving neighbour, and render me doubly dissatisfied with that state of respite and impunity in which he is permitted to live." In this condition of mind, nothing can be more gratifying than the self-assumed task of executing the Divine wrath upon his predestined head.

84. It is notorious that although Christians make a great noise about what is called religion—though they outwardly profess great veneration for what are called religious exercises, they do not, in reality, comply with the ordinances of their religion when those ordinances interfere with their propensities or conveniences.

85. Great sticklers for punctuality in every sort of devout practice, of moral duties—less tangible in their nature—they have but a vague and confused notion; and the criminality of actions, in reference to one's neighbour, they estimate according to the greater or less risk of detection.

86. The man who would tremble at the commission of crime in the face of the world, does not hesitate a moment when he thinks himself only seen by God. So feeble is the idea of divinity, when opposed to human passions. The remission of sins emboldens the wicked man to his last moment.

87. The heavenly musings of enthusiasts are very liable to be tintured by the notions and the passions which they have imbibed in their intercourse with the world.

88. So ingenious is the human heart in deceiving itself as well as

others, that it is possible those making pretensions to distinguished piety could not exactly fix the point at which their enthusiasm terminated and their hypocrisy commenced ; or rather, it is a point not fixed in itself, but fluctuating with the state of health, of good and bad fortune, of high or low spirits, affecting the individual at the period.

89. It is singular that those individuals who wear the garb of religion are so eager to point out as sin the venial levities that mingle with our various pleasures, while the vices glaringly prominent that attach to their own gloomy habits are overlooked.

90. Some who object to others the follies and frailties incident to their natures, have themselves vices the most abominable ; privy malice, backbiting, hypocrisy, murderous hatred, and spiritual pride in all its presumption and depravity.

91. The dupes of the prevailing superstition—the sanctified professors of Christian sects—what virtuous models of perfection ! what peaceable and spotless mortals !

92. “ Under the cover of religion,” to use the language of the Rev. President Knott, “ men, perhaps, more frequently indulge the bitterness of passion, without compunction, than in any other situation. The wretch who wantonly, and without some salvo to his conscience, attacks private character, feels self-condemned. But the sour, sanctimonious, grace-hardened bigot, embarks all his pride, gratifies all his revenge, and empties his corroded bosom of its gall ; and, smoothing over the distorted features of his countenance, says, and half believes, that ‘ he has done God service ! ’ ”

93. Sectarians are trained in wild imaginary notions, that inevitably make them despise and hate all mankind out of the little circle in which they exist ; and they are then told they must heartily and sincerely love their fellow-men.

“ And priests dare babble of a god of peace,
Even whilst their hands are red with guiltless blood,
Murdering the while, uprooting every germ
Of truth.”

“ They now
Babble of love and mercy, whilst their deeds
Are marked with all the narrowness and crime
That Freedom’s young arm cannot yet chastise.”
“ Priests first traded with the name of God.”
“ Searing reason with the brand of God.”

94. The whole of our religious belief rests on prepossessions and false persuasions ; therefore, the superstructure can only be the receptacle of fraud, imposture, forgery, persecution, murder, and the whole train of evils which attend the love and the pursuit of power ; for though religion pretends to subdue the bad passions, it only serves as a cloak to disguise them.

95. “ Alexander the coppersmith opposed us much ; the Lord reward him according to his works.” This is the characteristic expression of clerical spite reduced to impotence.

96. Religion has created a number of factitious antipathies—has made men hate practices which they would not have hated had their views been confined simply to the present life. But if men would not naturally have found those actions injurious, this is a proof that they are not actually hurtful. Religion, therefore, attaches the hatred of mankind to actions not really injurious, and thus seduces it from its only legitimate and valuable function—that of deterring individuals from injurious conduct.

97. The efficacy of public hate, considered as a restraint upon misdeeds, depends upon its being constantly and exclusively allied with real injuries. Whatever, therefore, tends to make men hate that which does not actually hurt them, contributes to distort public opinion in its capacity of a restraint upon injurious acts; the terms of moral approbation and blame are deceitfully transferred to actions which a regard for the public happiness would not legitimate.

98. Herein consists the principal vice of religion: a God is fancied; certain relations to him are supposed; modes of serving him are imagined; the office of priesthood is created; and priests violate natural liberty by constraining, where they can, all to conform with customs which are so profitable to themselves.

99. It is by exciting and keeping alive malignity that religion enforces its causeless prohibitions; and, therefore, its influence is injurious, not only by obstructing natural and innocuous gratifications, but by all the malice and animosity which she plants in the human bosom in order to effect her purposes.

100. All pleasures, not contrary to the course of Nature, may be made the instruments and the promoters of virtue.

101. It is a mistaken enthusiasm which strews fire and flames, groans and misery, in the paths of our innocent amusements. What end can be obtained by casting an artificial gloom over our transitory lives? There is quite enough of inherent solicitude in them without seeking for fictitious sorrows to depress us unnecessarily; why regard the fanatic's sinister croak, "Woe to them that laugh, for they shall weep?"

102. The clergy sometimes preach that "it is the lot of good men to suffer and be afflicted, and of wicked men to live in a flourishing and prosperous condition;" yet, when it suits another part of their system, they proclaim that "all are sinful, and merit eternal damnation." The assertion that the vicious are happy, all, except those who live by the cheat of a reversionary world, have considered a solecism.

103. Complaints overflow concerning the miseries prevailing in the world. It is asserted that "the *origin* of evil is a problem of the condition of mankind on *earth*, which never has been solved." This is confidently advanced to embarrass the mind, by those who know that both physical and moral evils are incident to the phenomena of necessary occurrences, and are aware of the eternal condition of existence, as well as ourselves.

104. The evils of the present life are acknowledged or exaggerated, or assumed as prognostics of a future state, in which these evils are to be done away and compensated ; but a supposed derangement in the only scenes with which we are acquainted is surely but an ill presage of better or happier scenes to be expected under the same government.

105. The main origin of our error seems to be in the doctrine of a future state ; for if the mind of man is not free, he cannot be the subject of reward and punishment ; but this doctrine, invented and supported by priests, to keep man in subjection to their power—foreknowledge in the established order of things—was confounded with free will, which cannot exist together.

106. Not all the vices of the priesthood ; their distracting the infant mind with terrors and prodigies ; their receiving people's money by dogmatising through centuries that the conclusion of the world is at hand ; their attacks on the liberty of the press ; their spurious laws ; their religious tests which cut off the conscientious from the enjoyment of their civil rights ; their base slanders to blacken the characters of those who exercise their reason ; their crippling the moral force of the intellect and deranging the springs of correct sentiment, by throwing in and familiarizing the vulgar language with the applications of those artificial terms of stigma that are artfully used to discredit truth, and thereby incapacitating the opinion for regulation by the standard of everlasting Nature ; their persecutions of philosophers and philosophy ; nor all their artifices to preserve and enlarge their dominion, in contempt of mankind, have done so much mischief as the dogma of a future state of rewards and punishments.

107. A doctrine so propitious to the wishes formed in the human mind, would scarcely fail to spread among those classes of people who are not satisfied with their prospects as resulting from the natural course of events.

108. Interested and ignorant men have created a system of terror ; the former to live on the labour of others, and the latter from an idea that the human race cannot be virtuous without being educated in *fear*. Hence the dogma of future punishment, and hence the zeal and anxiety of Christians to enforce this erroneous belief, which has been injurious to the best interests of society ; which has caused millions to be the easy dupes of impostors, who have been, and are, considered as a sort of “ turnpike gate to heaven ;” for, to be on good terms with their priest, silly men think a fair way for their souls to be saved.

109. It is incessantly repeated that religion is a restraint necessary to man ; that, without it, there would no longer exist the least check to their passions ; that morality and virtue are intimately connected with it. “ The fear of the Lord,” cries the priest, “ is the beginning of wisdom. The terrors of another life are salutary, and proper to curb the passions of men.” To perceive the inutility of religious notions, we have only to open our eyes and inquire what are the morals

of nations most under the dominion of religion? We there find proud tyrants, crafty ministers, arrogant prelates, corrupt magistrates, extortioners, knaves, crouching slaves, who have never doubted either the existence of an avenging and rewarding god, of the torments of hell, or the joys of paradise.

110. The crowds of abandoned men that fill our cities would recoil with horror from him who expressed any doubts of a god's existence. From the temple, where unbelief has been denounced in the name of heaven, every man returns to his accustomed course of fraud.

111. Superstition may boast about producing an important effect in the regulation of human actions; about religion being a necessary restraint on the conduct of man—the fact is otherwise: it restrains nobody, and that, for the best of reasons—human actions can never be regulated by considerations extraneous from the life and situation of men. It is law, moral sentiment, love of reputation, and love of happiness that must forever form the basis of human virtue and human satisfaction.

112. Have religious systems bettered the morals of people? Religion, in their opinion, supersedes morals; its ministers, contented with supporting dogmas and rites, never lead the mind farther than that state of abasement favourable to their views.

113. Religion is productive of nothing but an excessive laxity of good actions, and an intolerance of spirit in more than an equal ratio.

114. Priests ascribe to original sin the vices with which their pernicious institutions have infected the human race.

“ Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim that man
Inherits vice and misery, when force
And falsehood hang o’er the cradled babe,
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good.”

115. Belief in future punishments does not deter men from the commission of crimes. It is good laws, education, public opinion, vigilance in others, &c. that make men virtuous.

116. Shaftesbury writes, “ Liberal minds look on the pious narration of future rewards and punishments to be no better than children’s tales, and the amusements of the mere vulgar.”

117. For one timid man who is restrained by religious terrors, there are millions whom they render ferocious, useless, and wicked.

118. When corrupt minds discover the falsehood of those suppositions, they will be apt to think virtue itself, like the deity, a mere chimera, and see no reason to practice it in life. It is, however, as beings living in society, that we are bound by morality. Our duties must always be the same, whether a god exist or not. The depraved devotee finds in religion a thousand pretexts for being wicked. The moralist has no cloak of zeal to cover his vengeance and fury.

119. So far are adventitious systems, or the dreams of superstition, from assisting us in embracing good and rejecting evil, that they most

materially injure the cause of virtue, by rendering the character of right and wrong less perspicuous and distinct.

120. Morality is founded in the reason of mankind, and has for its object the general advantage; religion is founded in their folly, in pretending to dive into that which does not exist, and is converted into a gainful trade for a particular set of individuals: the one is simple and uniform, the other is vicious, mutable, and confused. The man who thinks and meditates, better knows motives for being good, than he who permits himself to be blindly conducted by the motives of others. Men who endeavour to enlighten that reason which imprints every idea of virtue, are not likely to reject the belief of a future state without serious conviction of the falsehood of the doctrine. The just man would have no motive for denying the existence of a god, if he saw not the entire fallacy of belief in unnatural and spiritual existences.

121. Morality is the only sure friend of happiness, and religion its greatest enemy; because, under the pretence of ensuring the felicity of a future life, it lays useless and severe restraints upon the present, and gives one half of mankind a power to torment the other.

122. It is declared with much emphasis, that without god there would be no *moral obligation*. This is *falsehood*. Moral obligation supposes a law; but this law arises from the eternal and necessary relations of things; relations which have nothing common with the existence of a god. The rules of men's conduct flow from their own nature, which they are able to know, and not from a supposed divine nature, of which they have no idea. These rules oblige us; that is, we render ourselves estimable or contemptible, amiable or detestable, happy or unhappy, according as we conform to or deviate from these rules.

123. Franklin writes, " 'Tis pity that good works, among some sorts of people, are so little valued, and good (cant) words admired in their stead: I mean seemingly pious discourses, instead of humane, benevolent actions. These they put out of countenance, by calling morality, 'rotten morality,' righteousness, 'ragged righteousness,' and even 'filthy rags;' and when you mention virtue, pucker up their noses; at the same time that they eagerly snuff up an empty canting harangue, as if it was a posy of the choicest flowers."

124. According to divines, that virtue which proceeds from correct disposition, or from regard to ethic beauty, is so far from having any merit with God, that it is made to partake of the nature of sin.

125. To weaken the natural regard for moral innocence, and deprive the mind of its rational satisfaction in well doing, the priests have proclaimed an imaginary goodness, consisting in devotion to their authority, in assent to their dogmas, and in hypocritical humility.

126. Piety—crouching, priest-reverencing piety, is the goodness of imposture; it leads astray the mind from the solid, practical, eternal obligations of moral righteousness.

127. There can be nothing good but moral excellence; there is nothing true, but that which is human and natural: the divine alone is monstrous.

128. The clergy have, by a long course of usurpation, established a pretended right to call themselves and their interests by the most imposing names, invented for their purpose.

129. Imposture, in order to sustain itself, stands in constant need of illusions and seductions.

130. Without the aid of that fearful, unmeaning term, "*sacred*," nothing could have kept man, irrational and stupid as his terrors made him, for so long a time, from discovering the imposition practised upon him for the sole purpose of keeping him in mental slavery and bondage.

131. All the senseless terms of religious cant should be expunged from language, as mischievous and delusive; and words only should be used which serve to convey ideas of things which can be understood and really exist.

132. Religionists have hoped to impede the progress of truth by throwing in the way the stumbling-blocks of words that have no sense; the deceptive barriers of misstatements, calumnies, and cant; by calls upon the feelings rather than the reason; by appeals to the prejudices, not to the sense: no means has been omitted that might possibly prejudice and stupify the intellect of man and render it insensible to the force of reason.

133. It is characteristic of the ignorant vulgar to confide more in him who zealously maintains triumphant error, than in him who modestly advocates despised truth.

134. What men want of reason for their opinions, they usually supply with rage.

135. Such is the influence of assertions often repeated—dogmas gravely and stately preached—that the weakness of human nature is seldom able to resist it. If men hear continually the same thing, they confound the repetition with evidence, and mistake every reiteration for additional proof of its truth.

136. Christian conceit discovers the peculiar sort of ignorant pedantry which always presumes that the argument is gained if secured by quoting a Bible text.

137. Theology is so fenced with scripture and creeds, that its advocates can overcome all difficulties; facts, however strong, must give way to religious dogmas, and human miseries are metamorphosed into physical evils, for the purpose of curing moral evils; and when enveloped in the thickest darkness, a supply of texts is ready, at every emergency, to be introduced as a quietus.

138. To hesitate concerning romances, lies, and absurdities, attributed to their brutal god by the most superstitious barbarians, is inevitable and eternal perdition. The reading of those scriptures, in the awe struck, superstitious mode taught, destroys reason in the embryo, as they forbid investigation; announce terrible punishments

against every doubter; threaten with the wrath of a supernatural monster the fancies of those who differ, even in thought, from the precept given, or who disbelieve the tale told, however repugnant to sense and reason the one, or absurd, shameful, idle, or childish the other.

139. Nothing can exceed the baseness of the clergy in taking the advantage which the ignorant prepossessions of the vulgar afford them, to assume that it is a vicious life which engenders reasoning and conclusions unfavourable to religion.

140. On his mode of dealing with evidence, the good or evil application of the powers of man—in other words, the greatest possible degree either of virtue or of vice—almost wholly depends. When a man gives himself no concern about evidence, he remains in voluntary ignorance: a habit to a certain degree predominant, of indifference to evidence on important points, implies one of the most odious and disgusting states of moral insensibility.

141. How rare is it to meet with a man who has ever concerned himself about evidence; who has not adopted opinions as he has adopted words—solely because they were used by other people: this is a dreadful vice of education.

142. The misconduct of the clergy with regard to evidence, proceeds to a high pitch. Not only do they inculcate prepossession on the one side, and thereby induce habits of unfairness—of that mental incility and corruption which unfit the mind for honest inquiry, and leave it without the relish for truth; they do what in them lies to prevent all regard to the evidence on the opposite side—to make those who are led by them purposely shut their eyes against it. They represent it as dangerous and wicked to look at it; the mind is carefully discouraged from inquiry; the opinions of the teacher are to be taken for granted without evidence, or the evidence which he adduces is to be held conclusive; and the very thought of weighing it, or taking into account the weight of opposite evidence, is treated as morally evil. Of all classes of men, the clergy are the vilest and most constant offenders against the virtue of dealing rightly with evidence.

143. An ascendancy is gained over the human conscience by impressing on the infantile mind sentiments which cannot be understood, but cannot be resisted.

144. Instilling opinions without the evidence, and at an age when the parties are incapable of judging, is a practice which necessarily engenders habits of complicated misconduct towards evidence. Opinions are held without regard to their evidence—a habit which is the foundation of all intellectual and moral depravity.

145. Everybody can adduce sufficient cases to show what sport the affections make with the understanding, and has observed how small the number of those whose decisions can be depended upon whenever the affections or interests—since what are the affections, if not a feeling of a particular interest—interfere with the judgment.

146. Not only are merit and demerit attached to mere belief, but consequences are attached of unspeakable importance to the holding or not holding certain opinions—the favour or disfavour of an imagined almighty god, and pains or pleasures infinite and eternal. Is it possible that a mind, with these impressions upon it, can come to the examination of any question touching those opinions, without partiality so much on one side, that no evidence on the other can have any effect?

147. In respect of religious matters, there is an intellectual cowardice instilled into the minds of people from infancy, which prevents them from venturing on inquiry. Credulity is made an indispensable virtue: to inquire, or exercise their reason, in sacred matters, is denounced as damnable.

148. The ignorance and superstition which surround our infancy and youth, favour the development of the imagination at the expense of the judgment; and we are ever employed in the coining of chimeras, rather than in the discovery of truth: and if ever the poor judgment make an effort to dispel these fancies of the brain, she is repulsed like a sacrilegious intruder into religious or masonic mysteries. “Will you set up profane reason against sacred mystery? No punishment is great enough for your impiety;”—and the same fires which were kindled for heretics will serve also for the destruction of philosophers.

149. Some divine is usually a president of every university. Youth are thus brought immediately under the modification of the priesthood; they are interested in religion; they are taught a pride in its institutions, and to war against all innovations—and such people the priesthood wants to uphold its ascendancy.

150. What must be the fate of youth under such preceptors? From infancy the human mind is poisoned with unintelligible notions, and distorted by phantoms; genius is cramped by a mechanical devotion, and man wholly prejudiced against reason and truth.

“Specious names,
Learnt in soft childhood’s unsuspecting hour,
Serve as the sophisms with which manhood dims
Bright reason’s ray.”

151. An effectual way to prevent an aptness of reasoning and a proficiency in the knowledge of physics among the more expensively educated families, is to chain their youth to the wheelbarrow of the dead languages. They are put upon such study early, and they pursue it to the exclusion of a free examining and reasoning upon causes and effects. If the mind of the young were but left to itself, it would not fail to get a habit of plain, correct reasoning, and a love of physical and moral truth. The only sure way to keep it back from these till its tendencies and relishes are perverted, and effectually to mislead it into another course, seems to be to set it about the study of the grammars of unknown nations, and especially of those who are extinct, and who have not even left a clue to their orthoepy.

152. To avoid the ennui, or tiresomeness attendant on the state of mind resulting from a mode of education which leaves the reasoning powers unexercised and the mind sterile, young men plunge themselves into all the disorders that degrade and shorten life.

153. Pretending that ignorance and indolence are the attributes of a gentleman; content with making a fashionable appearance at church, and with the ability to win at cards, many think it beneath them to take any pains with their understandings, and are incapable of the attention and application necessary for the perusal of a book concerning Nature and man.

154. Pedagogues may stuff the memory with all the rubbish of literature, to confound the imagination with logical controversy of words—not things—while sagacity only can effect the means of clearing the mind from its religious scrofula, by a skilful use of the understanding in a discipline of reason, to discover ends and means, or the theory and practice of human life—the true definition of wisdom.

155. Men would have been free and moral long ago, if their faculties had not been sophisticated with that stupid learning propagated in the schools of the priests, who find it to their advantage to plunge every thing into darkness, abtruseness, and ignorance, and to make of the world a waste howling wilderness in which they are the devourers.

156. There is one pitiful method of advancing the Christian religion of great importance in its consequences: it is the mean, artful, and impudent ascendancy which its priests and professors maintain over the female mind, and the unprincipled means by which they endeavour to perpetuate that ascendancy. Does a man break through the fetters of superstition, imposed upon him by the vulgar system of education, he generally places himself in opposition to the religious prejudices of one or more of the other sex—a mother, wife, or aunt—who, instigated by pious, artful pastors, or their pious professing followers, declare eternal hostilities against him, unless he renounces opinions produced by reflection, examination, and evidence—in other words, becomes a hypocrite, and professes what he does not believe.

157. Fordyce, a priest, in his sermons addressed to young women, enjoins it upon them, whenever the doctrines of their holy religion are made light of, to treat it as a personal insult.

158. The generality of women, under the customary mode of treating them, are left with minds uncultivated; they know little of the world, of truth either physical or moral; they are the creatures of imitation rather than of principle; they are unaccustomed to self dependence, and readily cling to any superstitious protection against the weak dread of their fancies; their ignorance and weakness dispose them early to lend themselves to dupery, and they can easily clothe themselves in the dress of pretence; they will sit in congregation, affecting a devout and most serious expression, with faces composed to solemnity, and any irrational stuff will be prized by them so it be administered as manna from heaven and be delivered with unction

and uttered in whining tone; they will depart and fancy themselves greatly benefitted, as though it were some good thing, and there were a merit in being present and looking awful during the ceremonies of some solemn charm of sorcery, or pious incantation or divination: and yet their understandings will not have acquired an additional idea, nor their stock of knowledge been increased in the least by the sounding phrases palmed upon the poor simple fools as realities, but not expressing the least sentiment of a natural idea. Of this propensity in illiterate females, villainous priests take the most unprincipled advantage. In matters of the Bible, most women forget themselves; there are no obscenities, indecencies, or barbarities here.

159. Customs, odious and ridiculous, have rendered men and women two distinct species, and introduced the most absurd disparity between beings naturally equal. Woman, in the present state of society, from her infancy, is treated like a doll, considered incapable of reason, and occupied, through life, with the most trifling concerns.

160. Flattered and deceived in their youth, by men who merely desire their persons, women find themselves afterwards slighted and despised, and are ever ready to avail themselves of any means for relieving themselves from the mortifying contempt into which they have fallen. The insinuating and obsequious priest, for his own ends, perceives the advantages to be derived from their situation, and artfully supplies their feelings with an object of interest in the consequence to be attained by attracting observation at church, and providing themselves with a little power and gratification to their *amour propre* by the distinction they aim at in associating themselves in the work of upholding religion.

“ I was an infant when my mother went
To see an atheist burned. She took me there;
The dark robed priests were met around the pile;
The multitude was gazing silently;
And as the culprit passed with dauntless mein,
Tempered disdain in his unaltering eye,
Mixed with a quiet smile, shone calmly forth:
The thirsty fire crept round his manly limbs;
His resolute eyes were scorched to blindness, soon;
His death-pang rent my heart! the incensate mob
Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.
Weep not, child! cried my mother, for that man
Has said, there is no god.”

161. Words that have no meaning; ceremonies founded in fraud and ignorance, and exercised in vapid ostentation; pride, arrogance, spirituality wholly incomprehensible; dogmatic precepts; cowardly belief in creeds without reason; and a sanguine resignation to the will of the priest, comprise the character of a Christian.

162. Priests maintain their false but profitable craft by nursing the sanctified prejudices of the ignorant, whose minds they keep so god-ridden that they cannot expand their ideas beyond their god-limited sphere—the hot-bed for the rank growth of every foul weed of moral noisomeness—all weakness, narrowness, and stupid bigotry in the

head; bitterness and cankered feeling in the heart. Perversity and narrow-mindedness generally go together. When a person has spent his days in the society of the ignorant and superstitious, he generally becomes false, narrow-minded, suspicious, and selfish.

163. The terms god and superstition are synonymous. Jehovah is a senseless term. Orthodox fools sit under nonsense uttered by croaking priests, when their time so lost might be engaged advantageously in the attainment of knowledge and happiness.

164. Religion, in fact, renders a man's understanding questionable, and at a time when the means for the attainment of knowledge are easily procured, prejudices are hardly excused by reason of the necessary influence of education in occasioning them; the doctrine of the power of circumstances is in this case scarcely a palliation, because a vicious perversity and brutish stupidity have been persisted in through moral culpability. The vices of scholastic and professional interestedness, aristocratic wealth, and obstinate bigotry, are perfectly culpable in their endeavours to support the rotten religion of the deceptive holy Bible.

165. A Christian trick, of some effect, in order to deter men from avowing natural principles by the consequent weight of odium that would be incurred, has been the audacious affectation of *presuming* that no one could possibly be an atheist—that no such unnatural monster could exist! Base perverters of terms! monsters themselves of all that is unnatural in sentiment, with their monstrous Jehovah! They well know that those they abuse with the artificial name of atheist do exist; that they laugh at every notion of supernatural monstrosities which the priests call sacred; that they are respectable characters in society; that they publish openly, with powerful effect, the truths of the godless eternity, of the infinite existence of men and of every other natural mode of being; and that they establish their demonstrations upon the palpable proof of the necessary existence of Nature in the infinite sphere submitted to our observation as far as sense or thought admits: they publish triumphantly that pure natural philosophy which brings every species of substance, every surrounding object, and every district of the world in equal confirmation of its authenticity. It is the consolation of these that the monster—church power—is now almost fangless.

166. Let not the man of knowledge regard as shame the stigma cast upon him by a vile priesthood, but let him be stimulated thereby to exertion in the cause of awakening mankind to a sense of justice and Nature, and exposing the craziness of Christianity. The false notion of a god will no longer be received as a necessary principle in society. On that, as well as on every other subject, men will henceforth be free to express their sense and opinions.

167. The mind should search only for truth—science, reality: every thing ought to be considered as subordinate to truth.

168. The most sacred duty of one who pretends to inform men is to speak the truth.

169. Fine instincts tend invariably towards truth.

170. To discover truth, we are to turn our backs on the multitude.

171. We should be too serious to adopt anything as a matter of course, however prejudiced in its favour by education and habit.

172. Truth is ever termed falsehood when it counteracts the train of the passions.

173. The vulgarest minds are always most reluctant to confess their blunders.

174. Truly does it require all the force of reason to be convinced of the nature of the infinite and eternal universe; and truly does it need all the fortitude of manhood to encounter the horror expressed by the ignorant at the construed impiety of him who speaks the truth of the simple natural condition.

175. The uninstructed are too apt to lend a sort of secret faith to, and place an humble dependence on, the initiated in the mysteries of any imposing profession.

176. Nations enslaved by priestly governments, whenever a people rid themselves of any kind of ecclesiastical oppression and discard the observance of those factitious ordinances which constitute religion, revile such people by denouncing their government as "atheistical."

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER VI.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS; THE CLERGY ITS OPPOSERS—INFRINGEMENT OF RIGHTS BY RELIGIOUS TESTS AND SUNDAY ORDINANCES—APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC ON THE URGENCY FOR RECLAIMING THEIR RIGHTS.

1. All prosecutions on the score of religion, or for non-observance of religious ordinances, are persecutions by the church; and the judges iniquitously lend themselves to be the instrument for effecting the ends of the clergy.

2. When the will of a certain portion of the community is sanctioned by courts of justice, so called, in an interference with the expression of a man's opinions, or to compel him to conform with religious usages, it matters not whether it be called an inquisition or a society for the punishment of blasphemy.

3. No restraints can be put upon reason and natural liberty of action, but what must be of dangerous consequences, by paving the way for persecution and oppression in points where the generality of mankind are most deeply interested and concerned.

4. To possess his liberty to do as he pleases, in all respects where others are not injured, without being controlled by the influence of superstition, would produce permanent happiness to man. Let us not be frightened out of our opinion, because priests condemn and render unpopular a line of conduct that might be injurious to *their* interests.

5. Despotic superstition, establishing itself now by force and now by an action insensible but sure, has darkened the human capacity to such a degree that the most palpable truths are unseen; and among others, that which shows the just measure of crime to consist in the actual injury done to society, and that nothing but priestcraft profits through the means of restraints laid upon human actions by the institution of religious days and religious formalities, the observance of which is a fraud upon our liberty, and yet enforced more strictly than an ordinary moral obligation.

6. The morals and understandings of mankind, and the manners of society, have been and still are most materially injured, and their liberties and interests abused, by circumstances which the outcry of priests and of folly would deem essential to the existence of society itself.

7. The species of despotism from which it seems the most difficult to be rid, is that fastened on us by the usages of superstition. It was possible to obtain release from the curse of royalty, but that of priestcraft still holds us closely in bonds. There really exists at this very time, in the United States of North America, as much superstition and priestly despotism, crippling human liberty, as there does in any of the South American States, and the liberal part of the public have just the same serious object here as there in contending against it in order to establish their natural rights. It seems that more than one revolution is required ere the stain of vassalage can be effaced. It is the priestly fashion of the day for constitutional principles to be construed democratic speculations, and the priestly policy is also to maintain the horrors of religion, in order to impose and inflict upon us, their slaves, all that church authority by which their craft is upheld. Were every violation of natural rights to meet, as a sure consequence, with private justice executed on the head of the instrument of oppression, in every case of infringement on innocent liberty, or outrage committed on persons who had done no actual harm, but only construed as such by those domineering in the name of religion, such, for instance, as offering for sale to any who might choose to buy on a Sunday; were personal retribution the proper consequence, no man would dare lend himself to be the minister of despotism, and there would no longer be fears felt about disregarding laws made to favour the priesthood. Another revolution may be necessary to free ourselves from professional prescriptions and impositions—Bible oaths, and the Sunday ordinances, which despotically infringe on natural liberty, and to free the bold and fearless genius of philosophy from the despotism of priests and the sectarian tyranny which it has now to sustain.

8. Upon what principle does a rationally tested morality doom us to inaction and prayer during fifty-two days out of three hundred and sixty-five? Upon none; it is the vicious principle of priestly interests and dominion which imposes the exaction in violation of natural liberty. The world is cheated into unquestioning submission to the arbitrary requisitions of those who profit by the despotic customs of priestcraft, and who assume for them the authority of law. All occupations of utility must be suspended, and the priest's shop alone be opened, where he can obtain fifty dollars each Sunday by the privileged trade of imposing upon men the fraudulent fabrications of knavery and superstition. Priests alone may make money on Sundays, and enforce their privilege of deluding, by their persecutions of those naturally and morally innocent. The honest dealings of a man in things natural, to assist in supplying the means of supporting himself and family, must draw down upon him the flagitious prosecution of some district attorney, subservient to, and incited by, the arrogant and rapacious ministers of religion, to rob and impoverish him by fines under the show of enforcing some atrocious law made to serve their ends; while, on the day sacred to religious profits, priests of abomi-

nable imposture grain wealth by duping the ignorant with absolute falsehoods, terrifying them into awe and slavery by means of their lying representations of a power or monster, able to do that which is not natural, to cause that water shall be wine, or any other positive impossibility ! How long are these knaves of the black order to receive pay for preaching miracles or impracticabilities ? How long are men to continue so ignorant, credulous, and superstitious, as to listen to their preposterous heavenly nonsense and deceit ? And when shall a well-informed and noble-minded public rise in indignation to accomplish the destruction of that priestly power which has so constantly abused the world by committing the crimes of tyranny and forceful fraud against the natural rights to freedom and the sacred reason of humanity ? The surest way to subjugate mankind to the purposes of despotic and religious villany, has been to gull them with everything untrue—with every unnatural pretence and delusion.

9. The principles of those who have discovered truth to exist in the eternity of Nature, and who deny the religious belief of the church to be truth, are violated, and their independence taken from them, by a compelled submission to priestly usages established with more than the despotism of regal power ; they who are disposed to do whatever is morally good, and to comply with all provisions necessary for the strictest maintenance of simple human obligations, are tied down to yield a compulsory conformity with the factitious requirements of priests, which they know have no connexion with the actual condition of our nature, but relate only to a supernatural phantom created for the purposes of imposture and oppression.

10. Our officers discharge all the duties of civil and necessary administration ; but the priests are our rulers, and dictate an unconstitutional rule to prevent our doing as we please on their bond day.

11. It is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use coercion, not reasoning, to procure its admission.

12. Every institution which inculcates or favours an error, a prejudice, a superstition—which limits the dearest and noblest rights of citizenship to the narrow circle of those uniting in a certain creed of unnatural falsities—to those who lend themselves to the support of priests, who make out of their imaginary god a stalking horse for their own arrogance, assumed consequence, and avaricious exactions—supplies a certain part of the community with arms to commit outrage upon the rights of the rest.

13. Let infamy be the portion of that religion and that power which cannot sustain itself but by dooming the mind to slavery, and by turning the press, that great organ of truth, into an instrument of public delusion and debasement.

14. A man who holds opinions which he dares not utter is a slave, and had better be an idiot without opinions ; better not to think, and, to fear to speak what we think.

15. Tacitus commenced his history of the reign of a liberal emperor by this energetic and rapturous expression of his sense of the enjoy-

ment of mental liberty—"Glorious are the times when men can think as they please, and speak what they think."

16. It is natural for persons to wish to promulgate what they think true, in opposition to that which they consider erroneous.

17. The virtuous man never publishes a sentiment which is not, to his own mind, perfectly justified.

18. All opinions which will not bear to be disputed are of little worth; and there is no disposition of mind so desirable as that fearlessness which leads men to seek after truth, without any regard to consequences, and that liberality which teaches them to acknowledge that they have been deceived. It should be our aim to rouse and nourish a healthy intrepidity of thought, both by our precept and example.

19. The man persecuted by religious power—the martyr to humanity, to freedom—the unshrinking adherent of despised and deserted truth, who, alone, unsupported, and reviled, still calmly and resolutely perseveres in vindicating the truth of the universe—is as superior to the warrior who triumphs in martial contest, as the science of universals, permanent and fixed, must be superior to the knowledge of particulars, fleeting and frail.

20. It is chiefly among nations where superstition, aided by authority, makes its heavy yoke be felt, and abuse of power prevails, that the number of free inquirers is considerable. Oppression infuses energy into the mind, and excites a strict investigation into the causes of evil. Calamity is a powerful goad, stimulating the mind to espouse the side of truth.

21. When malignant principles are called in to assist falsehood against truth, dogma against reason, and power against justice—without hesitation we should decide for the right. In this case, we should be perfectly disinterested; no prospects on earth, no fears of a despotic ruffianism, no love, no dread of a fancied omnipotent, nor any idea of a soul roasting devil, should dazzle our reason.

"And I will war, at least in words (and—should
My chance so happen—deeds), with all who war
With thought; and of thought's foes, by far most rude,
Tyrants and (priestly) sycophants have been and are."

22. Perfect freedom of opinion, entire regard for morals, and abstaining from individual personalities—these should be the only requirements from a writer.

23. Liberty of the press is a vain sound, unless every man has the power of publishing and maintaining any opinions he pleases on politics and religion—the two subjects of primary importance to mankind.

24. If one set of men are distinguished by the privilege of publishing whatever they please, while other men are not allowed to publish any thing but what these men of privilege may approve, it is evident that those opinions only will be allowed to be heard by the people, and will always be uttered in their hearing with praise, which

are calculated to lodge power in the hands of those who thus possess the monopoly of opinion, and to lay the rest of the community, bound in mental chains, at the feet of unlimited, unchallenged, insatiable rulers and tyrants. Such are the interests involved in a free press; and such is the instrument of human weal, against which it is the nature of priesthood to wage interminable war.

25. Every attempt to gain for the press an additional portion of freedom, has found in the clergy its most strenuous and furious opponents.

26. The art of printing was denounced by the priests as magic, and doubtless they foresaw that it was this magic that would destroy their own divine necromancy, which enabled them so well to lay the human intellect under enchantment.

27. False and fraudulent is that pretext for religious persecution which is wrapt up in the canting jargon, that "Christianity is part and parcel of the law."

28. The unconstitutional law of blasphemy sorely perplexes the lawyers. They would fain ground on it some show of reason, but the difficulties baffle their ingenuity, and they are compelled to content themselves with offering strings of words and phrases signifying nothing.

29. The shameful absurdities exhibited under the sanction of what is called "*common law*," demand the attention of all reflecting men. When institutions to which the people look for the administration of justice between man and man—for protection of innocence and chastisement of guilt—are perverted into arenas for the exercise of religious caprice, and are made to subserve the ends of bigotry, it is time that a new order of things should take place. If the citizens of a Republic, who assume the right and possess the ability to make laws for themselves, will suffer their rights, their interests, and their characters, to be sported away upon points of common law, a something that exists in no tangible shape—a nonentity whose qualities may be twisted to any purpose by legal contrivance, they no longer deserve the privileges nor the name of freemen. Whenever law becomes connected with religion, it is for the purpose of clerical oppression.

30. The following is an abstract of a letter from President Jefferson to Major Cartwright:—"I am glad to find in your book (*The English Constitution Produced and Illustrated*) a formal contradiction, at length, of the judiciary usurpation of legislative power; for such the judges have usurped in their repeated decisions, that *Christianity is a part of the common law*. In 1458, a question was made how far the ecclesiastical law was to be respected in a common law court, and an opinion was delivered that 'credence should be given to such laws as those holy church have in ancient writing,' to wit, their ancient written laws. In 1613, this opinion came to be misstated '*to such laws of the church as have warrant in Holy Scripture*.' In 1658, this false translation was erected into

a maxim of the common law. Hale expresses it in these words—‘Christianity is parcel of the law of England.’ By these echoings and re-echoings from one to another, it had become so established in 1723, that the court would not suffer it to be debated, whether to write against Christianity was punishable in the temporal court at common law.’ Wood, therefore, ventured still to vary the phrase, and says, ‘that all blasphemy and profaneness are offences by the common law;’ then Blackstone repeats the words of Hale, that ‘Christianity is part of the common law of England;’ and finally, Mansfield, with a little qualification, says that ‘the essential principles of *revealed* religion are parts of the common law;’ thus ingulphing Bible, Testament, and all into the common law, without citing any authority; and thus we find this chain of decision hanging, link by link, one upon another, and all ultimately upon one and the same hook, and *that* a mistranslation of the words ‘*ancien Scripture*.’ Here I might defy the best read lawyer to produce another scrap of authority for this *judiciary forgery*. What a conspiracy this between church and state!” This is the tricking practice that has been adopted, in imitation of English judicature, into American courts of law; and American citizens have been abused by its operation, yet they call themselves free.

31. The countries which adopted the Hebrew superstitions, and collectively called Christendom, are none other than hierarchies.

32. The United States of America have assumed the title of a republic, but the justness of this title is questionable so long as are retained in their institutions those hierarchical usages which have been adopted from the example of despotic England’s church and state; as long as a portion of the public, and that portion which is the best-informed in science of the highest order, is excluded from the pale of their natural rights; while the knowledge of the fact that the universe is infinite and eternal—the palpable fact of time and space admitting not of a comprehender—a deity—is deemed horrible crime; while aristocratic folly, pride, and stupidity, with their pageant church, and arrogant, hypocritical, and pedantic priest, exercise a power to subject the rational man to the artificial brands of atheist and blasphemer, and courts of magistracy require a surreptitious test, or refuse justice to the party hesitating to submit his conscience vilely to the exaction; while men are liable to prosecutions, fines, and imprisonments, for not acknowledging the sway of priests by yielding strict observance to the ordinance of their yoking day—the term republic can scarcely be applied correctly to such a state of superstitious abuse of liberty. A perfect republic can only exist where justice and security are enjoyed by all, which is not the case in the United States while the spirit of religious oppression dares exalt itself—while the natural birthright of man, liberty of conscience, is not safe from sectarian persecution; and while the state lends its powerful sanction to forms and customs, which reason and opinion had long consigned to oblivion—the government thus checking the progress of illumination and liberty.

33. Then only can be enjoyed the consummation of freedom and right, when such provisions only shall be law as shall procure the full privileges of humanity to every citizen, and when all power derived from the vicious and domineering usages of priestly interests shall be abolished—vicious and immoral, because unjust and despotic, false and fraudulent.

34. The most imperious and unobserved instinct in the human temperament is imitation. The people of America are so habituated to European customs, laws, and policy, that, although they have established the most inestimable law of human privilege—the absolute liberty of the press—yet every bold effort of inquiry and reason is declaimed against as disorganization, confusion, and anarchy.

35. In Europe, aristocracy has reduced the poorer classes of the community to a state of ignorance, toil, and poverty, and sings a lullaby to its victims of patience, faith, and paradise.

36. In America, where every individual lives in the enjoyment of property, or obtains a full remuneration for his labour, if you whisper a doubt about religion being the artifice of aristocracy, and if you affirm that it cannot possibly be the criterion of morality, which demands the intelligible basis of policy, identifying individual and public good—religious bigots, credulous fanatics, sectarian zealots, incited by their jesuitical priests, take the alarm, and affect to apprehend that the people will be instigated by scepticism to attempt the destruction of each other.

37. Oh! America, beware of priests! An aristocratic attempt has been made to usurp a power with the view to perpetuating religious oppression.

38. In a land of perfect light and liberty, superstition would hide her head as ashamed, instead of assuming a title to reverence, and standing forth impudently to resent all questions raised against the validity of her dictates.

39. Established Christianity—the Christian religion the law—this is despotic superstition, and true liberty cannot be enjoyed under its sway.

40. To break the trammels of prescriptive delusion; not to be affected by the petulance of timid friends; to encounter the calumnies of the priests and the babbling of the vulgar—requires fortitude and an exemplary elevation of soul.

41. All the assumed interference of religious authority with individual liberty is only sustained by prescriptive custom. Were such a din of thumped metal to annoy the public ear on any other occasion than the god-bronzed impudence of assumed right to abuse our nerves with the intolerable nuisance on the score of religious ceremony, the bells would be broken to pieces in a moment. Nothing but the priestly ascendancy, usurped over public opinion, would place men in subjection to Sunday restraints, and condemn the boarders in a house to abstinence from all amusements, and endurance of a weary burden of time on the day wasted in obedience to the assumed authority of

pious aristocracy—and any infringement of which oppressive custom causes such a squeal of alarm from the boarding-house dame, lest the credit of her house should be lost. Is it becoming that the conduct of men should be subjected to such pitiful and tyrannizing influence? Are we a nation of priest-ridden slaves and fools, that our innocent liberty should be thus oppressed by a hideous power exercised by the arts of a few fulminating priests?

42. One might suppose that the object in keeping up Sunday idleness was really to encourage wickedness, that a sham plea might be used by the priests for the necessity of their ministry; since it is well known that more vice is committed by the idle on that day than on all the days of the week besides; and it may be truly termed the day of evil.

43. The great object is to maintain the sources of lucrative error and ignorance, and beguile us from a sense of Nature, by means of all this god trumpery: so only can be fastened upon us the exactions and requirements of priesthood. This god spell of superstition is forced upon us and affects our most natural rights. We are impudently dared to say, at the peril of deprivation of justiciary law, that absolute falsehood is not truth, or to speak irreverently of the most mock solemn absurdities. Usages established by despotism, and maintained by bigoted custom, bind us fast in religious shackles. On the priest's day we must not work, we must not play; our will is controulled by the absolute will of the priest. We must not journey, we must not buy, we must not sell; but we must be prosecuted for breach of the Sabbath if we choose to employ ourselves in useful exertion or keep open our stores; we must be slandered by priests, and our prospects in society injured, if we yield not ready attendance at the priest's edifice; and civil justice is denied to us unless we say we believe in unnatural dogmas. Are we really slaves, that we submit ourselves to this dreadful power of priest's law and superstition, and allow ourselves to be deprived of our natural right to be honest in acting upon the just convictions of our minds as regards the truth of everlasting Nature and humanity?

44. What force of priest's power shall continue to intimidate those injured members of the community who feel indignant at the outrage done to their natural rights, as citizens, by excluding them from the pale of civil justice, because they refuse to violate conscience and Nature by declaring their belief in the falsehoods pulped forth by priests? Not for a moment should even threatened death crush the spirit of him who is resolutely and from principle bent on the vindication of truth and his civil rights.

45. The maintenance of religious tests in legal forms is incompatible with the rights of a great portion of the people. How much longer shall this abuse of jurisdiction continue to form a serious grievance in the community?

46. Not only is the truth of the Christian dogmas extensively doubted, but a respectable part of the public are well acquainted with

the demonstrations of their utter falsehood, and condemn the infamy of that priestly influence which would sustain the most contemptible absurdities of sacred supernaturals, in spite of the manifestations of the glorious, paramount, unquestionable realities of the unenviored, eternal, godless universe of Nature.

47. Shall not those enlightened citizens who are aware of the eternally existing truth of Nature, be freed from the vile submission required from them towards usages which sprung from ignorance, superstition, slavery, and despotism? Shall vulgar and ignorant religion longer enforce practices that are actually a compulsory enforcement of acquiescence with religious opinion, to the detriment of natural liberty and evident truth?

48. The virtuous and the intelligent citizens of America, who are determined on being free, and making their country truly a republic, will never desist from resolute and indefatigable efforts to break in pieces this yoke of religious bondage—this bar to the enjoyment of their rights—this Bible oath, Sabbath ordinance, street chaining tyranny—which ought never for a moment to have been retained from among the rest of the shackles of feudal barbarism and divine right abrogated by our revolution, and the continuance of which is a shame to freedom.

49. The attempts to force a belief in a fictitious god, and the alliance of power in favour of that order of men whose office it is to perpetuate superstitious ignorance, and procure for themselves the affluence taken from the means of others, by maintaining the admission of creeds founded on the monstrous falsehoods of credulity in supernaturals, is disgraceful to the knowledge and character of a liberal and brave people.

50. We may as well pretend that we can change the order of Nature, as say that we can believe in a religion which cannot bear investigation; or which, when investigated, proves destitute of truth, irrational, unnatural, and inconsistent. The “safety in believing,” recommended so meanly by many, if it mean implicitly to receive whatever opinion, authority, or custom dictate, is perfectly contemptible.

51. No authority, however great, can change error into truth: every cause ought to stand on its merits alone.

“ ’Tis not the preacher’s full curled wig,
And head, and form, and look so big;
’Tis not the master’s brandish’d rod,
Terrific frown, or fiat nod;
’Tis not the magistrate in state,
Can falsehood into truth translate;
’Tis not authoritative diction,
Without clear proof, can give conviction.”

52. Dugald Stewart writes, “The universality of an opinion among men who have received a similar education, does not afford any presumption in its favour.” He adds, from Fontenelle, “that the number of those who believe in a system already established in

the world, does not, in the least, add to its credibility; but that the number of those who doubt it has a tendency to diminish it."

53. When visionary systems are promulgated with all the pomp of scholastic etiquette, under the authority of priest-law, and institutions for education are controuled by priests; when the factitious crimes of profanity and blasphemy are liable to punishment; when such artificial connexions are given to religious ceremonies as are calculated to bias on the side of a persuasion of their verity and importance; when the influence of fashionable ladies is put in requisition to support church and priest, and gentility is arrayed in favour of their pride and consequence—an intention is indicated to keep men in the dark, to subdue them, depress them, and make them accept phantoms for realities. When such things are formally set forth in a book called holy, as having been experienced in reality, and when reason on the merits of that book is vehemently deprecated, it is all done with design to delude—to make something unreal pass for reality.

54. A profane book, containing shameless indecencies, would be frowned down with disgust. It is the Bible! People remain confounded; they hesitate; they condemn the abominations, and dare not condemn the book which contains them. It requires time before the dare to make use of common sense; but, in the end, they detest what knaves and simpletons had taught them to adore.

55. Vile creatures of priests inquisitorially and with effrontery track the streets, and intrude themselves within the doors of private families, enrolling names, and importuning, as sturdy beggars, for the means to assist in maintaining the imposing and splendid establishments of Bible and Missionary societies.

56. Every exertion is made by the rich, the influential, the ambitious, the interested, the foolish, the vain, the fashionable, the hypocritical, the deceiver, and the dupe, to keep up the Bible mania, and the religious aristocracy.

57. The speech made by some religious aristocrat at a Bible society is circulated in the newspapers, that the public may be influenced by learning—as how some noted one had listened to sentiments which made it evident to his mind he was a lost and condemned sinner; [strong emotion;] as how he would have "to lie down in everlasting burnings;" as how he finds inscribed on every page of the divine book that "God is a consuming fire;" as how he knelt down and prayed in bitterness of spirit; as how he found peace for his distressed bosom by his eye resting on the reviving assurance that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and imputing their trespasses unto him;" [the speaker obliged to pause from emotion, while half the audience are in tears:] as how he desired to bear witness to the power of divine grace; [here the effect is beyond any thing that ever was witnessed.] This is the pitiable imbecile and maudlin cant of religious folly serving to keep going the Bible trickery.* Oh, men!

* See Lord Roden's speech, which the editor of the New York American was not ashamed to copy into his paper of May 5, 1828."

when will the light of Nature enlighten your minds? When will ye be honest enough to cease your attempts at delusion?

58. Religious powers or charters are applied for to the legislature, pious tracts are spawned everywhere, and even pious coach and boat companies conspire to ruin every liberal establishment of private enterprise.

59. Artful incentives are dispersed among the fanatical party by means of addresses issued in piety journals, urging them to commit outrage by appeals made to their passions, to know "*why they suffer*" the existence of books in opposition to their faith, and in the same sentence insinuating sanctifying stimulants to their ruffianism by prescribing invocations to their god for assistance and sanction. To use their own language, these addresses are circulated "with all the industry of the spirits of darkness." But we will not retort invectives. Jefferson wrote, "Fanaticism, it is true, is not sparing of her invectives against those who refuse blindly to follow her dictates in abandonment of their own reason. Yet why retort? It is better always to set a good example than to follow a bad one."

60. A grand system of proselytism has been arranged; rules are given for the modes of attack, upon the old and the young—"the hour of affliction, the moments of despair," are pointed out as fit occasions to grasp the victims sectarian zeal.

61. When pragmatical parsons do not even disguise their machinations against our rights and liberties; when they call for an alliance of sects, and avow their project of uniting their numbers, and by that means casting the votes for election of their Lord Supper eaters as *rulers* to carry into effect their ends of religious dominion, it is high time to expose and put out of countenance their pious impudence.

62. If jesuitical priests and their abettors think to crush truth by having recourse to violence, and suppression of liberty, the very existence of which seems to be inconsistent with a continuance of their credit, let them show themselves in their true colours, and commence the work of holy ruffianism and godly destruction as soon as they please. Life is of no worth where there is not freedom and justice.

63. The main division of society must now be into the informed and uninformed; the prejudiced and the liberal; those acquainted with the perpetuity of Nature and the stupid or pretended believers in supernaturals—the fanatical spiritualists; and, in a country so far freed from oppression, what man of truth shall fear the strife?

64. The question to decide is, Are we really to be a republic—actually a free people—free as Nature—free to reason—free to speak the truth? Is there to be a nation on the earth where the rights of humanity can truly be enjoyed—where a Socrates who exposed the tyrannical shackles imposed by the effect of the vulgarly established religious prejudices, would not be subjected to religious murder? Are Americans to be a free, intelligent, scientific, moral, and philosophic people? Or are we to be merely a Christian people—to continue

always under the bonds of the Christian superstition—a mere offset or sprig of old priest-ridden Christendom? Is the country always to continue a mere Christian hierarchy, made to answer the ends of a set of Christian priests? Is belief in future hell and damnation to be sustained as law? Is the abominable Christian test oath to be continued a *sine qua non* for obtaining civil justice—and are the conscientious, who vindicate the truth of everlasting Nature, to be none but outlaws? Are those who choose to occupy themselves in business on the priest's sabbath to be persecuted?

65. Well adapted publications will, with certainty, effect such a dissemination of knowledge as to dispose by far the greater number to range themselves on the side of justice and liberty, and redeem themselves and their country from a dishonourable and degrading state of superstitious barbarism.

66. Let pride, fashion, and folly, with their show church, and wealth sustained religious aristocracy, their gentleman priest, their foppish worship, no longer suppose that sense, wisdom, and virtue, are their acknowledged attributes; let them not think that their fopperies and puerilities are longer to give law to public opinion; let them rather be aware that an enlightened public regards them as that residue of adherents to obsolete notions, whose ignorance, conceit, prejudice, and illiberal pride, prevents them from keeping pace with others in the acquirements of knowledge and virtue; and let them view themselves as convicted of adherence to formal, pedantic, and exploded systems of deception and fraudulently assumed consequence.

67. Let them expect the just consequences of persisting in foolishness, and bear the scourge of scorn and ridicule which will be inflicted on them as long as Christianity is construed to be “part and parcel of the law,”* and while judicial forms retain the oath—that odious

* CIVIL RIGHTS OF THE HETERODOX IN RELIGION.

It is with unfeigned pleasure that we give the following act of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, relative to freedom of opinion in matters of religion, which is said to have emanated from a late decision of Judge Story, in Providence, R. I.; by which a witness, on account of his disbelief in some religious dogma, was declared incompetent to give evidence in a court of justice:—

“An Act declaratory of the Laws of this State, relating to the Freedom of Opinion in Matters of Religion.

“Be it enacted by the General Assembly, and by authority thereof it is enacted, that, by the laws of this State, all men are free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same do not in any wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil rights or capacities; and that no man's opinions in matters of religion, his belief or disbelief, can be legally inquired into, or be made a subject of investigation, with a view to his qualifications to hold office, or give testimony, by any man or men acting judicially or legislatively.”

It is, indeed, high time that this example should be followed by the other States of the Union. It is utter absurdity that a man, honest and virtuous, should be debarred from giving evidence, and deprived of his rights, because he does not profess to believe what he cannot comprehend; while the wretch who pretends to believe in a future state of damnation, fire, and brimstone, is privileged to exercise it without question.

In the State of New York, if a man openly avows his disbelief in certain dogmas

test of belief in future heavens and hells, which violates the privileges and principles of sensible and honest men.

68. When it is considered how few is the number of those who are rich enough to make them the objects of priestly sycophancy, and who are associated with religious importance, and would stickle for the maintenance of forms which gratify their ambition and secure to themselves consequence, but are totally unsuited to the present state of opinion among our citizens—compared with the numbers of those from whom the priest can get nothing, and, consequently, care but little about, and they care nothing about him, except to despise him, and think as little of King Melchisedeck as they do of Doctor Sacheverel—who shall doubt the result of a contest for obtaining the entire riddance of those besotted practices which deprived men of their rights, and for bringing about such a revolution in legal forms as to render them entirely consistent with liberty—when the bigot who would attempt to persist in the violation of rights, shall be hurled from the bench. This cursed religious despotism still existing in our Republic must be overthrown.

69. Were the rich to devote one quarter of what it costs them for religious edifices—monuments of superstition—and priests' stipends, in institutions for instruction and utility, they would be as beneficial

of certain Christian sects, the court is bound, according to "common law, to reject his evidence. This is justice struggling with the fanaticism of our fathers, which ought to have died with them, and the perpetuation of which, in these days of freedom, is a shameful outrage on our civil rights, and a sad drawback on the mental privileges to which our political institutions entitle us.

CORRESPONDENT.

The testimony of a man was lately rejected by the Superior Court of Connecticut, [Judge Dagget,] BECAUSE HE WAS AN ATHEIST.

And who is an atheist, that he should be outlawed and a mark set upon him? Has he not the same civil rights as others? Are they not as sacred? Can any kind of opinions disfranchise a man from those inestimable privileges, when it requires an overt act to constitute treason? Has any authority in the United States a constitutional power to take from any individual such inestimable rights on account of opinion, be that opinion what it may? It is an incontrovertible truth, that civil and religious liberty can never long exist where moral conduct is not the standard of accountability between man and man. What has belief to do in a course of law? Had the evidence offered his belief or disbelief on any other subject, they would soon have told him "we want to know the facts, sir; we are not a tribunal to judge of belief or of opinions—they belong to yourself."

DELAWARE PATRIOT.

It is strange that in the nineteenth century, and in the American Republic, such a question as this should still be agitated. A man professes himself an atheist. Well: does this profession gain him popularity? Does it procure him office or emolument? Does it increase his reputation among his friends, or secure him from the attacks of his enemies? Will it ensure him an easy life? Is it likely to put him in the way of amassing the good things of this life? It is notoriously that the very reverse of this is true. He sacrifices to a principle, and abandons numerous advantages, to exercise his privilege of speaking what he believes to be true. And this is the man whose testimony shall not be received in evidence! He has boldly spoken the truth in the face of popular prejudice—has sacrificed his own interest rather than utter a falsehood—and he shall be deemed unworthy of credence! By the spirit of consistency, this is too much! Story or Dagget, or any corrupt Christian bigot, improperly acting in the office of judge, may say that the evidence of an atheist cannot be received—but if the lawyer cannot receive it, the honest man will.

NEW HARMONY GAZETTE.

to mankind as they now are otherwise; and the satisfaction they would procure for their own minds would be pure and rational.

70. Who, with a god-bound, superstitious spell upon his intellects, will ever benefit mankind by the enterprising use of his talents in the studies of Nature and science?

71. Since there is now a fast increasing class in society, who are well informed, and know that which is true, it is encouraging to hope that their benevolent efforts will retrieve the country from the evils of religious imposture and usurpation.

72. The time has arrived, when man, bursting apart the shackles which bound his intellect and paralysed his reason—submitting no longer to the influence of unnatural opinions imposed on him by dogmatising arrogance—fearlessly and industriously searches the causes which kept him under constraint and incapacitated him for being happy. He finds that he has been led astray into the captivity and dominion of delusion and imagination, and he hastens back to the path of Nature, reality, and universal premises—he forsakes the idea of supernaturals, and, for motives, reduces his measure of human conduct to the practice of actual honesty and benevolence in the simple relations between man and man.

73. Priests and their adherents, in this Republic, where they cannot exercise a power to crush by direct persecution, and now that they find public opinion slack in abetting their assumption of dictatorial ascendancy, have betaken themselves to craft and calumny, and are calculating that their ends will best be answered by affecting so much contempt for those who advance arguments to gainsay and expose the falsehood of their dogmas, as to excuse them from the necessity of acknowledging that they notice, or are affected by, the bold attacks of good sense, denounced by them *infidelity*, and under which their spirits are really writhing; and clerical coxcombs ruling the fashion, they indulge their last hope that they may be able to create and keep alive the same affectation of contempt in others, so as to make it appear disreputable for a man not to be in their train, and not to be seen ranged in his pew, concurring, with the rest, to prop up their pageant of aristocratic piety and pride from falling. The only way to counteract their craft is, by reiterated lashings and exposures of their pride, their arts, their nonsense, and their worse than uselessness, to bring general contempt and ridicule upon their superstition, and thus cast upon them justly the shame they are unjustly and wickedly meditating to heap upon us. Priests, look to your tottering cajoleries. Arrayed in folly's imposing band and cassock, how shall ye long flaunt through the streets, spreading wide your phylacteries, and not be the objects of public derision and hootings? Your impudent and wily art in placing other men beneath you, by pretending to know something which they do not, will no longer serve your purpose. It is enough to know that which is simply natural, and that the primary properties of matter are infinity and eternity.

74. Enough has been said against Christianity; but, though confuted, confounded, scorned, and cursed; though proved to be a vile fabrication, scouted by sense and reason; though void of the smallest degree of Nature and rationality; though accounted an absurd superstition and known to be the spawn of fraud and ignorance, begotten on ancient credulity, and disseminated, for knavish purposes, among stupid, credulous, and enslaved people—yet, for all this, fraudulent priests, nurtured from their youth in clerical craft, and foolish fanatics of the present day, preach up the ridiculous tale to the vulgar and unthinking, who swallow and gorge their coarse religious conceit with all the absurd and disgusting nonsense which the hypocritical teachers of the wretched, lying doctrine can add to it. The deceit and hypocrisy of the various priests of the numberless sects stand manifest in all their proceedings. They decry all who presume to question their creeds. With them it is a maxim never to read any thing which is written against them, and to warn their party against perusing the works of an opposing author. Some of the writings of the gravest of these determined, obstinate Christians, are truly laughable; but when they gravely vouch falsehoods for facts, and thereby establish a foundation for future frauds, it behoves us to stop them in the act, to detect their iniquity, and expose their shame on the spot. Such, however, is their sanctified impudence, their hardened depravity, that they blush not, and set sense, reason, and argument at defiance. The solemn, drowsy, unmeaning harangues of hypocrites, who preach up what they do not believe, deserve no reply, were it not for the pernicious prejudices they instil. While these continue to scandalize society, there should not be wanting those who will expose their infamy. The union of the sour, sanctimonious presbyterian, with the arrogant and aristocratic episcopalian, may again light the burning pile. What has been, may be; and it is only the power, not the will, which is wanting to commence a grand jubilee of godly slaughter and bloody destruction.

75. Religion would be beneath notice, were it not made the great handle for vicious purposes, and an engine for extortion and tyranny. While so many dupes believe the tale to be true, or are so ignorant as to say they believe in the absurd fable, while thousands of priests uphold the glaring lie, and are paid or exact millions annually for maintaining falsity to be truth—surely the greatest duty of knowledge and philanthropy is to use means for rescuing society from such a state of abasement and subserviency.

76. The priest well knows that when he is either engaged in the mockery of giving, or conferring, the Holy Ghost, by laying on of hands, or administering the sacramental god to be bitten by human teeth, or preaching up a non-existing god—he is alike dealing in jugglery and mendacity. He knows well that the idea of universal Nature being limited—that mind can comprehend infinity or commence eternity—is as absurd as to say that one is three, and three are one, or any other moral impossibility. Such is the sanctified and

artful depravity of the Christian parson, that, not being able by reason to resist truth, he resorts to any cover; and, disguising his hypocrisy in aped airs of sincerity, he thinks to affect and prejudice his hearers by feigning to weep in his pulpit prayer; and in allusion to those who so unprofitably for his interests deny the veracity of his unnatural religion, he, in whimpering and passionate tone and gesticulation, adopts the words of the pious romance, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and this, too, at the time he would, if he saw the possibility, excite his hearers to perpetrate their destruction by flames or sword. No prank so piously sly, but the priest will try it, for the sake of his fraudulently gotten pelf. In the same degree that philosophy advances, does the priesthood redouble its efforts to establish the reign of prejudices.

77. The false fabric of religious wickedness in high places is demolished; the mere breath of reason has been found powerful enough to shake down from its baseless pedestal the phantom god figured on high to impose on the imagination: the portals of heaven and the caverns of hell have been reduced to empty nothing by the beaming rays of science. A little longer, and the priesthood will have no influence over any portion of the population, except the most ignorant, and those hypocrites who adhere to priestcraft as they do to masonry, to obtain election into office or to gain a livelihood, or assume aristocratic and religious importance. No one but these will pretend to believe that a power infinitely wise and good, and who does all things by his might, should, knowing what he was about, make a devil to counteract his own operations, and create human beings to disobey his express wishes and commands. None but irrational beings could be brought to say they believe in such palpable contradictions and absurdities. Priestcraft is an incubus, pressing the population of all countries down to the lowest point of mental degradation; it perpetuates ignorance and poverty, vice and misery, by destroying the reason of man.

78. Let mercenary priests, religious aristocrats, and pious dupes, skulk their senseless nonsense, and practise their superstitious formalities within the doors of their own pageant temples—if the drivelling folly is longer to exist; but, in reason and humanity's name, let not their Christian impostures longer operate to affect the liberties of a well-informed and civilized public who are freed from superstition, stealing upon them an admission and importance for their creeds through the making them an article in the public administration of the laws! Let a simple affirmation of the truth be required in our courts, and the full punishment as for perjury be the consequence of its breach—but let not a man be required to poke up his hand and swear his belief in the cursed dogma of the horrid fires of the Christian hell, when he well knows that all that is real in his relations and duties, springs from his actual humanity. Let it be at man's own option how he uses his natural right to occupy himself on the first day as on every other, to work or to abstain as he shall think proper.

Let not our sense of freedom be violated by finding ourselves debarred from our rights to pass the highways, merely that a usurped power of oppression should be exercised, and an aristocratic consequence be arrogated for their prominent edifices of superstitious pomp. It will be found to be too serious a crime against human liberty to exercise longer this power of prosecuting for a matter of no guilt, but merely to uphold the usages of superstition and answer the ends of aristocracy. A man ought to have it in his power to use his faculties, manage his resources, and provide for his wants, with unrestrained liberty. The general interests of the community, far from requiring the restriction of its exercise, precludes, on the contrary, any interference with this liberty; and, in this branch of civil administration, the obligation to assure to every one the rights which he possesses by Nature is, at the same time, the only policy that can be of utility, the only office of social power, and the only influence the general will can legitimately exercise over individuals.

79. The orders or modes of natural affinities which compose existence are universal, infinite, and eternal. The term god is a solecism—the phantom of the imagination. The altars of superstition are but heaps of rubbish on which the mind has been prone to grovel and debase itself. Religion is a pure delusion; its hopes illusory; its fears vain; its dogmas absurd; its institutions vicious. Church power and church pride are arrayed against liberty; theological creeds are impediments in the way of truth and the progress of science; a lazy, jesuitical priesthood is an onerous and mischievous charge—its persecutions an abomination against humanity; the possession taken of the mind by religious fancies is the grand perversion of all natural sentiment.

80. The great incontrovertible fact, fatal to the dogma of a god's existence, is the infinity—the boundless and thought-eluding expanse of universal Nature. Every idea of a comprehender, creator, or providential superintendent is extinguished in the understanding that is sensible of this unimpeachable truth; and it will clearly be perceived that whatever bungling together of senseless expressions and false notions to confound the unwary and uninformed, and so sustain the belief in religious or unnatural dogmas, nothing of the kind can be advanced that shall not, when tested by the great principle or foundation of all truth—the eternal Nature—be found to consist of mere sophistry and falsehood.

81. Not an argument of the least force can the priest maintain against the evidence of the palpable truth of the eternal universe. Stupidity alone can be blind to the important fact of the necessary and infinite existence, and ignorance alone be liable to illusion from the fallacious syllogisms of theology. There needs not the least hesitation of asserting most roundly the irrefragable truth of the infinity, the eternity, the necessity of Nature's course.

82. Let every honest man espouse with entire confidence, with the fullest assurance of certainty, the natural and simple view of the ma-

terial world with which he is conscious of being identified only during the exercise of his animal functions; and let him conform to and reconcile all his ideas with this intelligent and correct understanding of the science of his being.

83. The charge of absurdity in the proposition of an infinite succession of finite causes and effects, on a very little examination, will be found to be false. Whatever difficulty we may find in conceiving of the particular modes of a necessary existence, which always was, and will, and cannot but be; always continuing, but which never had a beginning and never will have an end—as all the difficulty of such conceptions evidently arises from the absurdity of attempting to comprehend that which in its nature cannot come within comprehension, and as our reason forces us to grant the eternity, reality, and necessity of space and duration—it would be contradicting the most irresistible conviction of our reason to dispute these; and, indeed, it is out of our power to dispute them.

84. Infinity admits not the application of those terms which are in use relative to any dimension or continuity to which the comprehension of intellect extends. Locke forgot his own excellent definition of time and place, that “they are only ideas of determinate distances from certain known points, fixed in distinguishable, sensible things, and supposed to keep the same distance one from another”—only marks set up for our use to help us to arrange things in our understanding by showing their relative situations: this he forgot, and having granted that duration and expansion have parts, he applies his minutes and his inches to the admeasurement of eternity and infinite space. No multiple of what is finite can ever produce infinity: it is a perfect contradiction; the utmost extent of our calculations would only produce a determined quantity, and a determinate quantity, however vast, cannot possibly bear relation to infinity. Also, our only perception of duration can be from the succession of our own ideas. Locke’s faith was inconsistent with his reasoning; and while he could not name the name of god without making his bow, his natural perceptions were so just as to lead him into reasonings that show we have nothing to do with such a nonentity.

85. If enthusiasm and authority combine to produce and perpetuate fanatical prejudices, we may congratulate ourselves that enthusiasm will not be less effectual in promoting the cause of truth and freedom. It is the passion of truth and fidelity to Nature that will always inspire a noble spirit of independence and indignation against wrong, and against the power which establishes error by compulsion; free minds will be too manly, and too just in principle, to consult about their ease and comfort, or even their lives, when it is their duty to revolt against oppression. Nature’s perpetuity is the simple truth. Every supernatural fiction, from the fabled god almighty of heaven to the infernal imp of hell, is contemptible and odious error, delusion, and superstitious folly, the established belief in which is the extreme of wickedness and tyranny.

86. The rights of man to act independently of all authority, except that of laws which serve to insure security and restrain injuries, are imprescriptible. It is not because the lawyer says so, in courts that assume divine powers, or would exercise a power to enforce laws pretended to have originated from divine authority, that the voice of the majority has the force to compel the minority to conform with commands merely religious, not moral; and it is a monstrous oppression, that those who yield themselves up to the superstitious enactments of Moses, or any other divine impostor or tyrant, should subject to their will the well-informed and innocent individual who cannot reverence the prejudices that prevail for usages that are not consonant with natural liberty.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER VII.

METAPHYSICS—MAN THE CREATURE OF CIRCUMSTANCES; HIS MORAL IDEAS DETERMINED BY THEIR INFLUENCE—NATURE IS NECESSITY—IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION—VIRTUE AND VICE.

1. The business of philosophy is observation; and the results of that observation constitute all her knowledge. She receives nothing as truth until she has tested it by experience; she advances no opinions unsupported by the testimony of facts; she acknowledges no virtue, but that involved in beneficial actions—no vice, but that involved in actions hurtful to ourselves or to others.

2. The only method is, instead of leaving superstition in quiet possession of her retreat, to inquire seriously into the nature of the human understanding, and make an exact analysis of its powers and capacity. We must submit to this fatigue in order to be at ease ever after, and we must cultivate true metaphysics with some care, in order to destroy the false and adulterate.

3. Accurate and just reasoning is the only catholic remedy fitted for all persons and all dispositions, and is alone able to subvert that abstruse metaphysical jargon, which, being mixed up with popular superstition, renders it impenetrable to common reason, and gives it the air of science and judgment.

4. Here lies the justest objection against a considerable part of metaphysics, that they are not properly a science, but arise either from the fruitless efforts of human vanity, which would penetrate into fancies out of Nature and utterly inaccessible to the understanding, or from the craft of popular superstitions, which, being unable to defend themselves on fair ground, raise their entangling brambles to cover and protect their weakness.

5. True metaphysics are reason in accordance and consistency with Nature or truth; they are pure moral science—correct moral and practical calculation.

6. Metaphysicians, confounding the doubtful propositions of moral truth with the absolute propositions of science, have invaded the province of good sense, and made a chaos of the moral world.

7. True metaphysics, or the theory of logic, is nothing more than the science of the formation of ideas, their expression, their combina-

tion, and their deductions or inferences; in other words, they are the study of ourselves and of our means of intelligence. Pedagogues supposed that, as metaphysicians, they must explain the origin of the world, the nature of a first cause, the essences of matter and of spirit, and any thing else than that which is natural and can be understood; they also thought that, as logicians, they had but to study how to become adroit in disarming those whom they could not convince. Still dissatisfied, and with reason, that their art left them in embarrassment, but was insufficient to inform or persuade those who doubted, the Christian religion maintained its decisions, and introduced its use into all philosophical discussions; the empire of force thus really became instated in the proper province of persuasion. They were subtle and wary, because they could not be luminous. They were violent and tyrannical, because they were not themselves confident in the honesty of their means of defence. Though the universal submission to the decrees of metaphysicians, since the commencement of the era of Christian barbarism, has prevailed even to stupidity, they have never known assurance. Whenever their opinions have been questioned, they have done what blockheads always do when they have said what is unintelligible, and an explanation is demanded. They confusedly feel that you have not comprehended them, nor themselves neither; they affect to be persuaded that you have not listened to them with sufficient attention; they repeat impatiently the same thing in like or equivalent terms, furiously affirming its clearness, and imprecating against those who are not convinced. Thus the cries of the schools have resounded and people's intellects have been stunned.

8. Every system of metaphysics has been a monstrous romance engendered by the eagerness to dogmatize, by which the mind has been bewildered in viewing phantoms for realities—in adopting things supposed for things proved.

9. Reason and sense will never bewilder themselves in incomprehensible metaphysics, in which numberless theses commence and terminate in absolute conjecture; in which the terms used being without analogy to determine their sense, each one determines them arbitrarily in his own way, if, indeed, the trouble is taken to determine them at all.

10. They who aim at finding words out of relation with things, by which to express the subtilty of their ideas, may be said to abhor the contact of substantial and tangible Nature. Instead of admitting mind to be nothing without Nature, they represent the soul as a something out of Nature; and, endeavouring always to escape from reality, they labour to seize the shadow they fancy to be an ethereal being, but which is nothing more than our fleeting thoughts.

11. If theorists were to confine themselves to Nature, and divest their minds of all the prejudices of the nursery, the school, and the church, we should hear no more of the *soul*—of a thinking spiritual being—thought without material organization. Unshackled by the

dogmas and terms of priestcraft, man would confine himself to the truths perceptible in the course of natural perpetuity.

12. The time for the fall of religious despotism, we trust, is coming. It has long enough warred against the freedom of the mind, and stifled the voice of truth. It has long enough violated the natural rights of man by persecuting him for innocent actions, and elevated its triumph upon social degradation. The true conspiracy before which tyranny is to fall, is that of virtuous, elevated minds, which shall consecrate themselves to the work of awakening in men a consciousness of the rights, powers, and immunities of humanity; which shall oppose to force, the heroism of intellect and conscience, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and enthusiasm for true liberty.

13. It is truly strange that men should have hitherto thought almost any species of knowledge preferable to that which teaches us what manner of beings we are; while, in truth, this knowledge of ourselves is the one thing needful for happiness, and the one thing essential to any permanent improvement in the condition of man.

14. A decided negative may be given to the existence of an innate principle of knowledge, or discrimination between right and wrong, beyond the capability of being educated in that discrimination.

15. Man is so constituted, that, by the adoption of certain measures in his infancy, and by steadily pursuing them through the early period of his life and till manhood, he may be taught to think and act in any manner that is not beyond the acquirement of his faculties: whatever he may have been thus taught to think and to do, he may be effectually made to believe is right and best for himself and mankind. He may be also taught, however few may act and think as he does, that all those who differ from him are wrong, and even ought to be punished with death if they will not think and act like he does. In short, he may be rendered insane and depraved upon every subject which is not founded in, and which does not remain in never varying consistency with the facts that surround mankind. It is owing to this peculiarity in the constitution of man, that, when he is born, he may be taught any of the various dogmas which are known, and be rendered wholly unfit to associate with his fellow-men who have been trained in any of the other dogmas.

16. When we shall see things as they really are, we shall know that our fellow-men have undergone the same kind of process from infancy which we have experienced; that they have been as effectually taught to regard their sentiments and actions right, and ours wrong, as we have been taught to imagine ours right, and theirs wrong; when, perhaps, the only difference is, that we were born in one country and they in another.

17. There are people, to be sure, who cannot imagine any thing possible or endurable which is not the actual practice of the time and place and society in which they happen to be born; and who cry out against that as a dangerous and impracticable theory which is the actual practice, and has been so from time immemorial, of some other

place, perhaps not twenty miles distant, the inhabitants of which are equally convinced of the impossibility or dreadful consequences of every other practice but their own. It is an error inherent to the narrowness of uninformed minds, to make their own habits the standards of excellence, the supreme points of virtue to others.

18. There is no association of ideas and sentiments so barbarous and inconsistent with Nature that it may not be established in the human mind by enthusiasm and authority, with all the firmness of intuitive truth, or perceptions received directly by means of the senses.

19. That property of the mental faculties which renders it difficult to eradicate our early instruction, however beneficial it might prove were correct ideas alone inculcated, serves now but to give permanency to error, and to blind our judgment. Had it not been the case that any impressions, however ridiculous and absurd, and however contrary to fact, may be given in infancy, so as to be tenaciously retained through life, men could not have passed through previous ages without discovering the gross errors in which they have been trained.

20. The infant comes into being unknown to himself, and is afterwards modified by the localities of his birth, acting upon the individual constitution, which differs more or less in all, and he uniformly becomes what these make him. The rank of life, the character of the parents, the qualifications of his instructors, and the habits, tempers, and dispositions of those who surround the individual from childhood, are circumstances beyond his control, yet these determine his language, his habits, his disposition, his propensities, feelings, and sentiments—his religion and his conduct.

21. A man's opinions are generally formed by education, and changed or maintained by circumstances over which he has little or no control.

22. Mankind are the same throughout, and only modified by situation, society, and education.

23. Society is an assemblage of sensible beings, susceptible of reason, who seek pleasure and shun pain. Nothing more is necessary to engage their concurrence in the general welfare.

24. Judgment pre-supposes sensibility; and judgment itself is the fruit of comparison or experience.

25. Moral character, principles, or character in general, are formed by the unconscious adoption of the maxims and practices which prevail among those around us, and the insensible assimilation of manners and sentiments that results from this contagion.

26. The true measure of morality, to which every man is primarily and passively trained, is that of the age and country in which he lives—the class and circle of society to which he belongs.

27. The principles of morality, which are acquired by imitation and habit, are as much a part of the general system of the moral world, as those propensities and temptations to vice which seduce or impel; and no motive can operate upon man which is not the result

of natural causes; therefore, we are just as safe from the dangers of vice under the belief of necessity as if every man believed himself a free agent.

28. An analogous course of events, or chain of causes and effects, takes place in morals as in physics: our sensations, thoughts, and emotions are simply effects following causes—a series of consecutive phenomena mutually producing and produced.

29. The moral man is only the physical man, considered in a certain point of view; his visible actions, and invisible sensations, are equally the natural effects and consequences of his condition. Nature is all necessity.

30. The necessity that governs the physical, governs also the moral world, where every thing is subject also to the same natural process.

31. Necessity is the infallible and constant tie of causes to their effects; and this universal necessity is only a consequence of the nature of things, in virtue of which, the infinite existence is affected by the flow of time—the inevitable action.

32. Nothing is the work of chance—nothing is the consequence of free will; the privilege of free acting belongs to no being; we are tied down by the fetters of duty; our path is limited by the regulations of honour; our most indifferent actions are but meshes of the web of circumstances by which we are all surrounded.

33. We seem to have the power of choosing, because, when two things are proposed to us, we must take the one or the other; and though at one period of time, they seemed indifferent, and even after our choice, we think uselessly that we had the power to choose the reverse; but this is fallacious; for we acted from the motive which was strongest at the time, and that motive was only the result of impressions arising as much from the mechanism of the mind, as seeing does from that of the eye. These motives impelled us to act, as much as the heavier weight inclined the balance; so that we might just as well say, “we might have acted differently if we had acted differently;” that is, if the lighter weight had been the heavier, it would have turned the balance.

34. We direct not the current of events which hurry us forward, and render our utmost efforts unavailing.

35. Every one experiences, that times occur, when, far from being able to control external circumstances, man is unable to rule even the wayward realm of his own thoughts.

36. If man fancies himself the free agent he is not; if man regards many of his actions as wholly spontaneous (or unmotivated) which are the last inevitable effects of a long series of prior hidden causes; if man overlooks the vast machinery working in the progress of time, by which, independent of his will, all we behold, unto that very will, is produced—it is precisely because his intellectual organization is often compelled to volition and its consequences, by agencies so much more complex and minute, and distant, and yet connected, that, from that very circumstance, it is often impossible to trace them to any

particular anterior source, and to recognise them in any particular later effect: man only thinks himself more peculiarly gifted with liberty than other animals, because he is subject to a greater number of more subtle and uncontrollable influences, physical and moral.

37. Men do nothing spontaneously, but what they prefer; their virtues, their vices, and their decisions, are neither more nor less than preferences.

38. Notwithstanding the doctrine of human liberty, men have universally founded their systems upon necessity alone. If motives were thought incapable of influencing the will, why make use of morality and education? We establish institutions to influence the will; a clear proof of our conviction that they must act upon it. These institutions are necessity demonstrated to man.

39. Choice by no means proves liberty; since hesitation only finishes when the will is determined by sufficient motives; and man cannot hinder motives from acting upon his will; the motive which determines the will is always the most powerful.

40. A little reflection will suffice to convince us, that man is necessitated in all his actions; his ideas, opinions, and notions, true or false, are necessary fruits of his education; his passions and desires are necessary consequences of his natural temperament, and of the ideas with which he has been inspired. During his whole life, his volitions and actions are determined by his connexions, habits, business, pleasures, conversations, and the thoughts that are involuntarily presented to his mind; he can desire and will only what he judges advantageous or pleasing to himself; he is necessitated to choose what he judges most useful and agreeable.

41. When we trace the true principles of our actions, we find that they are always necessary consequences of our volitions and desires, which are never in our power.

42. If the wicked act necessarily according to the impulses of their evil nature, society, in punishing them, acts necessarily by the desire of safety and preservation.

43. The errors of men are a necessary consequence of their ignorance; their ignorance, prejudice, and credulity, are necessary consequences of their neglected education, inexperience, negligence, and want of reflection. Truth, experience, reflection, and reason, are remedies calculated to cure ignorance, fanaticism, and follies. The interest of some men, and the folly of others, necessarily oppose the admission of truth.

44. We are so cradled in, and imbued with erroneous prejudices in our infancy and youth, that it is hardly possible but that truth should give way to falsehood; and this is the main source of the disorder of our minds, and which produces that of our moral conduct. The human race have been almost entirely kept under the empire of ignorance and error, and have been deprived of the means of repairing, by instruction, the baneful effects suffered from the condition in which they have been plunged for others' profit.

45. Almost all the misfortunes, which oppress man in a moral

sense, arise from errors of judgment; crimes, vices, bad conduct, spring from false judgment: how important then is it to think justly, that is, to establish only those relations which really exist.

46. Vice is always making false calculations.

47. Conscience is the effect of knowledge, received from exterior impressions made on us through the medium of our senses. According as our moral attainments may be true or false, limited or extensive, in the very same proportion is our conscience correct or incorrect, contracted or expanded. Men are invariably virtuous in proportion as they have clear perceptions of things.

48. Some few men of bold and vigorous understanding, may found their morality on reflection, and regulate their conduct by principles which they have thoroughly weighed and digested into a system; but the greater number never give themselves any trouble about the matter, and are guided in their notions and actions by that practical standard of the general opinions and examples of their equals, and their own experience of consequences. Men, in point of fact, always follow their inclinations, and yield to their passions, as far as it is safe to do so; the only check being their precaution against the ultimate pains of indulgence, which this standard supplies.

49. If it is desired to give good habits to children, then those circumstances which experience has proved to generate bad ones will be withdrawn, and other circumstances be introduced, which are known to create good habits. Necessity demonstrates education—instruction—to be a primary consideration.

50. Education, above all, gives the mind habits useful to the individual and to society. Men have no need of celestial rewards or infernal punishments.

51. Cause man to view this state as alone capable of rendering him happy; bound his hopes to this life, instead of misleading him with tales of a futurity; caution him against being infected with the bigotry which surrounds him; show him what effect his actions have towards his neighbours; make him active, benevolent, useful; teach him to value the affection of his contemporaries, and let him know the consequences of their hatred; instruct him that nothing can be either beautiful or estimable, which has not for its basis the solid foundations of Nature and truth.

52. How can it be possible that virtue should grow out of belief in precepts mixed up of good, bad, contradictory, absurd, and indecent? What can be more favourable to the growth of vice, than to represent as the chosen of their deity, men whose conduct has been fraught with deceit, rapine, cruelty, debauchery, and murder? What is to restrain the evil propensities of the believer whose notions of his deity lead him to infer that an assent to certain mysterious dogmas can ensure his salvation, whatever scourge he may have been to society; that by repentance the vilest sinner may be saved at the last hour; so that the most infamous scoundrel may, without a single useful deed secure an eternity of happiness?

53. Every thing that tends to unfetter the mind, to enlarge the understanding, to give scope to liberty and loosen the chains of priest-craft, should find its way to the understandings of men, and more particularly to those of the rising generation.

54. What can have so fatal a tendency to corrupt the morals and understandings of mankind, as tenets demanding that sacred attention to frivolous observances—a consideration due alone to useful and noble actions? Is it possible, under such wretched circumstances to distinguish what is really right or wrong; to fix with precision the boundaries of morality? In short, the more superstition each individual possesses, the less motive for his regarding his duties towards his fellow-men may be looked for. Humanity and beneficence are the results of the finest feelings of human nature, and generally accompany the best understanding—perfections that harmonize not with hypocrisy and deception!

55. When has morality been made the object of religion? How few moral treatises has it supplied; and what millions of interpretations, commentaries, glosses, paraphrases, annotations, and polemical nonsense! If the priest glance at virtue and wisdom, it is but to colour his pretensions; hear, how dull and uninfluenced the preacher treats a moral topic;—on points of faith, on the audacity to think for one's self, in denouncing the atheist, how animated, how strenuous to affect his hearers! then the whole man is called into action, and the formalist, by his voice, language, gesture, and countenance, declares the emotion of his soul: why? because in matters of faith, he is professionally and personally interested.

56. However customary it be to disparage morality, the small grain of it found in the composition of religion, is the last resource to fly to for a show of justification of the utility of the pious quackery.

57. He who asserts the doctrine of necessity, means that contemplating the events which compose the moral and material universe, he beholds only an immense and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects, no one of which could occupy any other place than that in which it does act. The relation which motive bears to voluntary action, is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been, the subject of popular or philosophical dispute.

58. Reward and punishment must be considered by the necessarian merely as motives, which he would employ in order to procure the adoption or abandonment of any given line of conduct: the doctrine of necessity does not in the least diminish our disapprobation of vice.

59. The doctrine teaches us that no event could have happened otherwise than it did happen, and that, if a supernatural power—were such possible—is the author of good, it is also the author of evil; that if it is entitled to our gratitude for the one, it is entitled to our hatred for the other; that, supposing the existence of this hypothetical phantom, it would also itself be subjected to the dominion of an inevitable necessity.

60. Admitting for a moment his existence, God could not be considered as a free agent. His manner of acting would necessarily be determined by the perfections inherent in his nature ; nothing could be capable of arresting or altering his will. Neither our actions, prayers, nor sacrifices could suspend his conduct ; whence we are forced to infer that all religion would be useless

61. No condition can be conceived, in our imagination, more unfortunate than that of a deity contemplating this world of his creation ; no condition can be conceived more desperately, more hopelessly wretched ! The worst of human miseries shrink into insignificance before that of their author. How must every sigh drawn from the bosom of man rend the heart of his god ! How must every violence, committed on earth, convulse the peace of heaven ! Unable to alter what he had fashioned, how must God equally curse his power and his impotence ! And, in bewailing our existence, how must he burn in vain with the desire to annihilate his own !

62. Supposing the power of God without limit, and his knowledge extending to the future as to the past—how monstrous the conception ! What demon, figured in the brain of insanity, ever surpassed this deity in malignity ? Able to make perfection, he hath sown through Nature all the seeds of evil.

63. Theist, thou makest of thy god a being more weak, more wicked than thyself.

64. If it were possible that any almighty, intelligent power should really engage to establish a pure and perfect system of religion among mankind, that power would certainly accomplish its purpose in a more perfect manner than has been done ; more effectual means would surely be taken than those imperfect instructions, contradictory narrations of doubtful events, and useless miracles.

65. Confident in the firm foundation supplied by the science of the universe, we stand boldly erect and affirm with certainty, that no sentimental invisibilities—no spiritual or supernatural agents, can exist ; but that all which really concerns us, during our transient and precarious consciousness, is to derive our gratifications from the objects that surround us ; that the only interference with our liberty of acting, is the designless influence of that routine or thread of occurrences—that forced passage forward through the time we exist—which places us under the obligation to determine our choice, or will, in the use of those powers for supplying our exigencies or gratifying our fancy, which opportunity places within the reach of our means and within the sphere with which we are implicated. This is all the ground on which to frame a doctrine of necessity, all the utility to be derived from the nature of which will appear to be the fact, that as effects correspond with causes, both moral as well as physical, it behoves us to derive from the experience of the past, so just a sense of the mode of guiding our conduct and operating upon the minds of those who are affected by our precepts and examples, as to act in agreement with the principles best calculated skilfully to produce

effects—fruits of moral excellence—and conducive to the exercise of natural rights—civil and intellectual freedom.

66. To say that everything is for the best, in a system where much is acknowledged to be bad, may satisfy implicit faith, but can never convince inquiring reason.

67. In pretending to find everything good in the world, where good is necessarily attended by evil, the optimists seem to have renounced the evidence of their senses. Good is, according to them, the end of the whole ; but the infinite can have no whole ; if it had, it would cease to be infinite.

68. No man, who has not constantly lived in the most luxurious and monstrous indulgence, will say that life is not filled with troubles, and perpetually affording matter of aversion and disgust to men of benevolent minds, who are anxious for their own happiness and that of others.

69. Some modern authors have endeavoured, ingeniously enough, to compound betwixt ancient faith and modern incredulity. They have exhibited phantoms, and narrated prophecies stangely accomplished, without giving a defined and absolute opinion, whether they are to be referred to supernatural agency, or whether the apparitions were produced (no uncommon case) by an overheated imagination, and the accompanying presages, by a casual, though singular coincidence of circumstances. This is, however, an evasion of the difficulty, not a solution.

70. “ There is but one step,” said Paine, “ between the sublime and the ridiculous ;” and, in an age of incredulity, we must own it would require at the present day, the support of the highest powers, to save the supernatural from falling into the ludicrous.

71. To what purpose can it be, that the desponding prejudices and baneful errors of dark ages, should influence the reasonings of men who live at a time when everything is so much reversed ?

72. Truth animates existence, and knowledge gives a lustre to the human mind. Ignorance, obscurity, and superstition alone occasion the mischiefs, and vices which disturb society.

73. After we have become acquainted with Nature—truth—how absurd and contemptible become all the dogmas and rites of religion ; how ridiculous and odious the ecclesiastical institutions ; and how abominable the flagitious crimes of the church ! Implicit faith—how simple !

74. Brown says, “ Yet do I believe that all this is true, which, indeed, my reason would persuade me to be false ; and this, I think, is no vulgar part of faith—to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to reason and the arguments of our proper senses.” Then he informs us how he attained this gentility of faith : “ The smattering I have of the philosopher’s stone, hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief.”

75. The formidable trinity, compounded of ignorance, superstition, and hypocrisy, is the only demon or devil that ever has tormented, or that ever will be likely to torment, the human race.

76. This threefold, horrid monster, has been most speciously gilded and decorated with external trappings, to awe the ignorant multitude, and deter them from examining the black venom and corruption within. It was, at sundry times and places, made death for any mortal, except the initiated, to approach these hidden mysteries.

“ They have three words—well tyrants know their use—
 —God, Hell, and Heaven.

A vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend,
 Whose mercy is a nickname for the rage
 Of tameless tigers hungering for blood.
 Hell, a red gulph of everlasting fire,
 Where poisonous and undying worms prolong
 Eternal misery to those helpless slaves
 Whose life has been a penance for its crimes.
 And heaven, a meed for those who dare belie
 Their human nature, quake, believe, and cringe
 Before the mockeries of earthly power.”

77. To what shall we look for relief from these plagues? How prevent or correct their pernicious influence? Let us endeavour to shield our offspring from their tremendous yoke. Let us imprint on their early mind, that we can be generous without fancying that we love heaven; that we can be just and honourable without fearing hell; that experience has taught us that religion—that what is false and unnatural can have no good effect on the human mind, but, on the contrary, renders it vicious, and hardens it against love, friendship, kindness, and liberality. In investigating the errors of mankind, let us instil into their minds the firmest persuasion, that the incidents which glaringly contradict the established phenomena of Nature, are but the dreams and erroneous conclusions of men involved in barbarism and obscurity; that all pretended miraculous events are imposture. Let us impress every correct idea of Nature on the minds of the young, for, after a certain age, it is hardly possible for minds that are hardened in error to be susceptible of liberal ideas.

78. The inhabitants of Christendom style themselves the rational, the civilized, the intelligent of mankind. Yet, with all their boasted knowledge, are they not absurd enough to confine to the trifling limits of a few thousand years, the existence of the animals and vegetables, the human race, the world itself, the suns and planets pervading the infinite expanse, which, with their various modifications, have existed uncaused eternally. The records of our immediate predecessors they have made the bounds of antiquity. Children of a day, they have given but a day to the existence of Nature. They, whom fanatics and idiots exalt above philosophy, have dogmatized that existence has only been for an inconsiderable portion of time. As divines formed the world from nothing, they also dogmatise that, at no remote period, it shall return to its original vacuity. Enemies to liberal investigation, when the result of it would seem to contradict their favoured opinions, people prefer, with a blind and unlimited confidence, the barbarous tenets of their ignorant ancestors. As if incapable of distinguishing obvious and simple truths from the most

glaring contradictions and absurdities, they tenaciously adhere to the grossest superstitions of the darkest ages. And though surrounding existence, insulted nature, as it were, rises up in vindication of itself, and, in contradiction to their contracted and ill-founded creeds, yet, pertinaciously attached to the folly of their intolerant and stupid predecessors, they refuse their assent to truths the most sublime and unquestionable, and they censure those who vindicate the cause of Nature and truth.

79. When we see polished and learned nations, such as the English, French, Germans, and Americans, continue, notwithstanding their knowledge, to kneel before the barbarous idol of the Jews; when we see these enlightened nations divided into sects, defaming, hating, and despising one another for their equally ridiculous opinions concerning the conduct and intentions of this unreasonable idol; when we see men of ability foolishly devoting their time to meditate the will of this god, who is full of caprice and folly, we are tempted to cry out, "O! mortals, ye are still savage!"

80. He who is kept in such ignorance, as to be able to offer no reason for truth, either moral or physical, must necessarily be the dupe of imposture, impudence, and hypocrisy.

81. The human mind, perverted by a religion maintained by the craft of tens of thousands of well paid priests, has hardly advanced a single step in improvement. Logic has been uniformly employed in attempting to prove the most palpable absurdities. Theology has attributed rights to kings by telling them that they had their power from God. The laws became subject to the caprices of religion. Physics, anatomy, and natural history, were only permitted to see with the eyes of superstition. The most clear facts were sophisticated, when inconsistent with religious hypothesis. The moral sciences have ever been regarded with jealousy by those who hold, and seek to tighten, the reins of religious power.

82. Men whom we know to be hypocrites, lazy, mean, and ignorant—knaveish blasphemers against Nature and true sense—lead what are called respectable lives, that is, the enjoyment of comfort and affluence, by preaching stale lies and absurd notions and nonsense, about heaven, hell, and a world to come, as if they had seen them. An ignorant and deluded populace aids the impostors, by swallowing whatever ribaldry is uttered from the clerical tub, and torture themselves with an incomprehensible category of intrusive nothings. How respectable depravity may become, in appearance, when supported by a reverend priestly air!

83. Our knowledge should be founded upon research, not respect. Credulity is always a ridiculous, often a dangerous failing: it has made of many a clever man, a fool; and of many a good man, a knave.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER VIII.

IMPROVEMENT OF MANKIND—GENERAL DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE—
BENEFITS TO BE CONFERRED ON THE USEFUL MEMBERS OF SOCIETY
BY IMPARTING TO THEM THE PLEASURES TO BE DERIVED FROM
INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS—LOVE OF TRUTH A PASSION.

1. Such is the influence of the priesthood, that science is still obliged to truckle to hypocrisy.

2. He who ever so sincerely and seriously exercises his reason on philosophical subjects, and divulges opinions contrary to the religious creed, is even now subjected to obloquy and priestly malice.

3. Even at the present day, in the cities of the United States, where men pretend to call themselves free, such is the religiously debased and enslaved state of men, that booksellers, whatever may be their own opinions, are afraid openly to offer a book for sale, which, setting forth the truth of Nature, might give umbrage to the scholastic interestedness, aristocratic wealth, and brutish bigotry, which are combined in the work of yet preserving the rotten, mummied religion of the vulgar holy Bible.

4. A cursed joke that—that priests of imposture and their followers should arrogate sacred reverence for their deceptive foolishness, and raise the cry of shame against the man of sense who is courageous enough to encounter their Christian ruffianism.

5. A man is not such but by the advantages of his reason, and this should be used in informing ourselves in the study of Nature, and in unravelling the difficulties she proposes to us. Scientific improvement imparts to man a new and a blameless dominion over the inanimate world, which may render materials, before useless, conducive to the comfort, the convenience, or the elegancies of life.

6. The reason why we are so imperfectly acquainted with the various objects around us—the great obstacle which opposes our successful prosecution of almost every science—is the imperfection of our senses.

7. The reason why the sciences have not advanced, is, that scholars have been afraid to depart from the ideas entertained by the schools, lest they should sacrifice their prospects, or draw down upon them

the ire of old-fashioned professors; and, if a man dare advance a sentiment with respect to morals or religion, at variance with what was whipped into his grandfathers, a thousand years ago, it is immediately said, "he is wise above what is written;" and he is represented as that terrible monster—an infidel.

8. The vulgar are always in arms against those opinions which differ from the ruling notions. Study and examination can alone supply that liberality of judgment without which it is impossible to acquire additional knowledge, or even preserve such as we have; for we submit to certain received opinions, not as to truth, but as to power; and thus human reason is accustomed to servitude even in the fields of literature and philosophy.

9. At every step we take in the study of the universe, the relations of objects, the applications of resources, extend, multiply, and become complicated in our view; and, in each kind, the acquaintance with them, and their systematic exposition, constitutes that knowledge which we call science—the natural province of man.

10. The minds of men, or their ideas, are acquired; and these ideas are enlarged, corrected, and strengthened, by intelligent intercourse; they can advance only by degrees—can attain to no state of knowledge but by a progression more or less slow. After many defective attempts, they are enabled to distinguish, by comparison, that which is well or ill of every kind; so that what is called an art is but the result of reason and experience reduced to method. Whatever savours of religious superstition, either in the arts or in speculative science, can only subserve the purpose of their restriction, and impede their course and their progress.

11. The mind should be stored with learning, strengthened with principles, and formed to habits of reasoning and observation.

12. To attempt to improve mankind on any other principle than by a close, accurate, and undeviating attention to facts, is as absurd and unavailing as to expect that man, immersed in ignorance, and surrounded by every vicious temptation, shall be better, wiser, and happier, than when trained to be intelligent and active, amid circumstances only which would perpetually unite his interest, his duty, and his feelings.

13. The state of the world will never be materially improved till knowledge shall be more generally diffused, and the multitude are taught to act from a just sense of their own interest, rather than from passion and prejudice. Hitherto we have scarcely come to the investigation of the condition of our being with half of our reasoning powers; the residue have been absorbed by a legitimized superstition, begotten in youth on our ignorance, matured by precept and example, and confirmed by surrounding bigotry.

14. The difficulties we apprehend, more than those we find, is the only thing that prevents philosophy and virtue from being commonly attainable in general life.

15. Let no one be afraid of the bulk of the community becoming

too accomplished. Well educated, and even well versed in the most elevated sciences, they assuredly may become; and their general benefit will be ensured thereby.

16. It has been often repeated, that "*if the people will be deceived, let them be deceived*;" but they have no choice, no chance to escape deception, unless the truth be fairly and publicly exhibited to them, and their minds duly enlightened.

17. The greatest benefit to be conveyed to the useful classes of the community, would be to impart to them the means of deriving enjoyment from intellectual habits. The sex, to whom Nature has entrusted the first developement of our intellectual and moral powers, and who may be regarded as the chief medium through which the progress of the mind is continued from generation to generation, needs to share largely in the general improvement.

18. The husbandman, who supports us by the fruits of his labour; the artizan, to whom we owe all the comforts and conveniences of life—are banished from what is termed intellectual society; nay, worse, but too often condemned to the most severe physical privations, and the grossest mental ignorance; while the soldier, who lives by our crimes—the lawyer who lives by our quarrels and rapacity, and the priest who lives by our credulity or our hypocrisy, are honoured with public consideration and applause.

19. While authority, prejudice, and power, have pertinaciously contended that it was necessary to restrict freedom of inquiry; that there might be too much boldness of opinion, and too much liberty of intellectual enterprise—the strong necessities and genuine interests of mankind have slowly but steadily urged them onward to an indefinite perception of their rights, and a corresponding assertion of claims to the natural exercise of their privileges.

20. No greater evidence is afforded of the wide extended and radical mistakes of civilized man, than this fact: those arts which are essential to his very being are held in disparagement: employments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness.

21. It is much to be lamented that too many people yet conceive that there are some opinions which ought not to be tolerated, as they imagine the free expression of them would tend to disorganize society, by subverting what they believe to be the foundation of virtue. How can any danger possibly arise from the unrestrained expression of any opinions whatever, where reason and truth are left free to combat them? It is time the world had done with such groundless apprehensions: they have been sources of infinite mischief in all ages, and in every country.

22. Such people breathe the very spirit of despotism, and wish to communicate it. It is impossible not to infer from their apprehensions, that as men increase in knowledge, they must see reason to disprove the systems established.

23. How can that mind be constituted which contemplates the progress of human knowledge as matter of regret or fear?

24. The wider the diffusion of knowledge, the better the people are informed, the more they understand—the more likely they are to see and comprehend what is for their good, and the means by which that good is to be attained; the more likely they are to abstain from such means as would be prejudicial in their operation, and calculated rather for the prevention than the attainment of that good.

25. Serious pecuniary obstacles exist against the general acquisition of knowledge. As we acquire knowledge we throw off all notions of spirits. Priests feel the loss of their benefices; they would rather see men vicious than wise; they view the drunkard, the idle, and the ignorant with pleasure, as the pretext for maintaining their own interests; and, therefore, they decry as wicked the earnest devotion of the mind to any other application than their own illusions. Knowledge is their bane, but the useful man's happiness. The priest says, "the preaching of lies is profitable to me; therefore, my lies must be called important truths."

26. Staggered with the idea of contradicting notions so generally adopted, and which have long been disguised under the mask of an elevated authority; possessed of some Gothic and vulgar ideas, that the essential security to society is universal ignorance and superstition; perhaps influenced not a little by the dread of the censures of the prejudiced part of mankind; in short, to avoid imaginary stains upon their characters, men, otherwise sensible, and even liberal in their sentiments, give to the errors of delusion too ready a countenance. They suffer themselves to be carried away, at the expense of reason and sound judgment, by the torrent of hereditary folly, and the vulgar prejudices. By this holding back of truth, and tacit sanctioning of error, many are deceived into an opinion that the first minds in society approve the things and believe the opinions that are in general practice; the public field of argument is left for the bigoted and the prejudiced; and, by dint of continued repetition of the same antiquated doctrines and exploded errors, these zealous and ignorant defenders of orthodoxy impress on the minds of the people the general feeling, that virtue and conformity are synonymous terms.

27. There are smart but unprincipled men, who, seeking nothing beyond present emolument and consequence, entrench themselves behind existing institutions, and avail themselves of existing prejudices, that they may profit from all existing abuses. This may be the predominant spirit of those who lay claim even to liberality. An idle fear on the part of those who have escaped from the thralldom of superstition and prejudice, that, along with orthodoxy would perish many of their privileges and enjoyments, causes them to countenance the existing system. But for this fear, the charm would long since have been broken, and the master minds of society would have spoken their real sentiments in simplicity and truth.

28. Men have, in no instance, exhibited greater cowardice and more dishonesty, than in matters of religion. They who profit by it, value the system according to the profit it brings them. Others fear

to oppose notions supported by pecuniary interests, and falsely assent to their truth—to their close relation to things.

29. There are men who think that no one would, unless from disappointment or vexation, render himself obnoxious to the priesthood—a body of men whose ascendancy is universal over society; but is not indignation at seeing the world goaded by superstitious terrors, and made to contribute to support those who have ever conspired against the happiness and dignity of their species—their liberty and reason; is not this feeling sufficient to inspire every noble spirit with a desire to emancipate mankind?

30. To destroy the connexion between the knaves who deceive and the fools who are deceived; to shame the knaves, and reduce them to honesty and reason; to enlighten the ignorant, and give wisdom to fools—must be the ardent task of the wise. Truth, honour, and justice, the laudable ambition to do good, inspire the noble undertaking.

31. There are minds, indeed, which, long habituated to corruption, can see, in the tyrannical possessor of a power unjustly arrogated, only a source of favour, and of all the partial and prodigal largesses of favour, more easy to be obtained, as requiring in return, only that profligate subserviency to every vice, which such minds are always sufficiently ready to pay; but what long usage of corruption does it require before tyranny itself can cease to be hated!

32. Those possessed of power, find, in the moral depravity of society, a guarantee of their accidental pre-eminence; they would think their political existence in danger if there were less vice and more virtue around them.

33. For men of knowledge to make that knowledge subservient to all the purposes of ignorance, and to all the vices of the great cheat upon mankind, called religion, is a painful proof of baseness of character even among educated men.

34. Can it be supposed that men, possessing extensive scientific and literary knowledge, can believe the monstrous absurdities of Bible barbarism? Impossible! Not believing what they so strenuously advocate, they mischievously and wickedly palm it upon the ignorant for the purpose of emolument.

35. If the community were to take away the millions paid in salaries to the priests, they would all, in one year's time, say the whole story was the most absurd and fraudulent fable ever invented by man, or believed by the gaping multitude—the most absurd superstition which devout ignorance or cunning and impudence could invent, effrontery preach up as a doctrine, or simple credulity accept as a creed.

36. Some men, undeceived themselves in religious matters, pretend that religion is useful to the people, since, without it, they could not be governed.

37. And can it seriously be thought that deceiving mankind is the real interest of society?

38. Has religion had a useful influence upon popular manners?

It enslaves, without making obedient; it makes idiots, whose sole virtue consists in a blind submission to paltry and silly ceremonies, to which more consequence is attached than to real virtue or pure morality.

39. It is only by showing men the truth, that they can appreciate its value, and find motives for cultivating it.

40. What interest, we are asked, can man have for denying the existence of a god? But are not the tyrannies exercised in his name, and the slavery in which men groan under priests, sufficient motives for determining us to examine into the pretensions of a class that occasions so much mischief in the world? Can there be a stronger motive—or interest—than the incessant dread excited by the belief in a being who is angry with our most secret thoughts; whom we may unknowingly offend; who is never pleased with us; who gives man evil inclinations, that he may punish him for them; who eternally punishes the crimes of a moment?

41. A few men of talents are opposed to common sense and experience—as if the most absurd and flagitious religions have not had learned and scientific men prejudiced in their favour.

42. Baffled in all their sophistries and falsehoods, priests proclaim the mysteries of religion to be above reason; that reason is incompetent to fathom its recondite truths—the stale and universal artifice of impostors in all times; they employ reason as long as it serves them; when its decision is contrary to their dogmas, they then deny its jurisdiction.

43. Locke says, “ Every sect, as far as reason will help them, gladly use it; when it fails them, they cry out, ‘ it is matter of faith, and above reason.’ ”

44. Religion would embrace incommensurability—and in that it is engulfed and lost. Men are no longer blind to the fact of an infinite universe of Nature being necessarily eternal.

45. Christianity in its rise was a superstition in full power, which scorned the presence of reason or humanity. Now, that, after a long period of abject submission, in spite of its persecuting ruffianism, the rights of intellect begin to be asserted—the church is, in spite of its rancorous aversion, obliged to appear to mix up some pretence with its doctrines; but it is to sophistry to which it is obliged to resort; and, in endeavouring to meet the arguments of philosophy it confounds itself, and is plunged into contempt.

46. There exists at this time too much good sense in society—too much information, and too easy a facility of communication between man and man, for corruption long to enjoy its honours, and fanaticism its credit. The presence of both are as yet endured, but their acts do not meet with general approbation; they are too much at variance with the actual state of civilization, and, strange to say, superstition itself is constrained to resort to some appearance of moderation.

47. It is argued that the discussions of religious unbelievers are a noxious poison when applied to the minds of those arrogantly deno-

minated the vulgar classes. There is more of sophism than of truth in the remark. It is assuming that which cannot be proved. The natural capabilities of all conditions of men are alike.

48. There is a certain measure of useful knowledge which men attain early; which receives but small additions, and beyond which they are never able to advance much, if at all. Such is the natural advantage in attaining so easily what is their greatest concern to know; for, indeed, they must have suffered extremely, if the discovery of it had been left to the slow researches of their reason. But other things, which are not forced upon them by the experience of their necessities, open themselves by little and little, and in a long process of time.

49. The mathematics of common observation, which all possess, is perfectly sufficient to enable the student to understand all the great facts of existence. Simple truths, learned by experience, form a very important body of mathematical knowledge, and are a passport to the understanding for all the general laws of Nature.

50. That portion of judgment which is sufficient for the discovery of simple truths and useful knowledge, and which teaches us to reject striking absurdities and palpable contradictions, is of much greater utility than all the arts of logic and rhetoric.

51. The highest questions may be placed in a point of view level with the understandings of all.

52. Rhetoric is an art in which a man may be distinguished without other aid than natural discernment.

53. To one of limited attainments, it may be some consolation to be assured, for a certainty, that men of finished education are as liable to err as those whose education has been most neglected.

54. It is easy to learn the unchangeable exigencies of society.

55. The ideas of men gain in justness, what their pursuits and mode of education prohibit in extent.

56. Learning is the dictionary, but sense the grammar of science.

57. The days of superstition and ignorance are passing away. Comets are no longer viewed as portentous omens of evil; the planets excite no apprehensions as it respects their influence on the earth; and the fixed stars are considered as suns having worlds revolving round them in the like order of our planetary sphere.

58. A succession of events, something similar to what is continually observed, has eternally taken place; Nature, through an eternal period of duration, has been a process necessary and immutable. In the infinite existence, in vain do we seek for the beginning of things. How fruitless every recourse to calculation on the subject! The stretch of conception necessarily fails us; multiplied series of numbers, of which we cannot possibly have any adequate idea, unavoidably stop short, and leave the extent always removed to an unlimited distance—leave the mind always in infinity.

59. The truths of the eternal universe are not modern discoveries; they have always been known to the few who have, in every age,

been the faithful observers of Nature. The obstacles against knowledge, existing in established superstitions, have prevented its dissemination. While the different religions have ever been changing and superseding each other by force of the caprice of enthusiasm and political policy, Nature and reason have constantly remained the same; and those who view Nature at one time, see it in the same light as those who regarded it in ever so remote periods. But persecution has hindered the promulgation of truth. The adherents to existing superstitions reproach the materialists for not being able to produce authors in support of their system, while, at the same time, they well know that their flames and tortures have prohibited the avowal of truth by all except the honoured and noble few who have, from time to time, been the suffering objects of bigoted ruffianism, committed by the detestable order of priests.

60. The unceasing immutability of religion shows its fallacy. If religion were a matter of fact, and capable of being reduced to first principles, its conformity and universality would be established; but, as it is a fiction—a mere phantom of the brain, it will never assume a permanent character.

61. Mankind and Nature are eternally the same; and it is idle to suppose there ever has been, or ever will be, a time when the faculties of the one or the properties of the other should be different from what they are at present. The only difference that can exist in the condition of man, is the greater or less improvement of his faculties, and the understanding and enjoyment of his rights at various epochs and in each country.

62. The preaching of the priesthood over the world has not improved the condition of mankind; but has served their own turns: their very preachings stand in the way of all true charity, and ever will do so as long as they shall be permitted to govern and oppress the human race by means of depraving their imaginations, and in infancy destroying the reasoning faculties. The clergy preach peace, while all their doctrines necessarily lead to war; they preach charity, while all their doctrines necessarily lead to the most uncharitable feelings of hostility towards all who differ from them; they preach poverty and humility, while they endeavour to grasp at all power, and to live in comfort and luxury at the expense of those who furnish them the means by submitting to privations themselves: in short, they preach the names of the virtues, while they have no idea of producing their practice.

63. To know our prejudices is the first step to knowledge, and to disembarass ourselves of them, is to shorten the way to its attainment.

64. Religious prejudices are ignorance of natural principles.

65. It is not decision, but demonstration, which is evidence of knowledge.

66. There is nothing finer than to yield to truth; it will appear that he who so yields, is not overruled by his prejudices, and that

he is persuaded that nothing can be more noble than to yield to reason.

67. He who devotes himself to the investigation of truth, finds sufficient incitements in the object he proposes to himself; the love of goodness and truth becomes an absolute passion, the entire force of which could not have been known, till now, that by reasoning, science, and fact, it has been proved that the happiness of men accrues in proportion to the advances they make in the acquirements of knowledge; and that both knowledge and happiness may be increased indefinitely. This novel passion is not rare in the present day; and it is as energetic and more durable and constant than any other passion.

68. This passion for the true and just can never be too vehement; particularly when it is an object to communicate it to others.

69. The love of truth has always been the strongest passion in the breast of him who has genius: full of that enthusiasm inspired by high motive, he burns to extend his acquaintance with Nature; and the obstacles raised by ignorance and superstition only excite and augment the energies of this passion.

70. What obstacles cannot be surmounted by him whose object is the attainment of knowledge? He is daunted by nothing; he braves all dangers, makes light of all difficulties, and finds no rest till he has drawn forth into open light the operations of Nature that were concealed from his view, and placed all his conclusions upon the certain basis of demonstrated facts.

71. The priesthood of the United States, are at this present time uniting together in associations and issuing their bulls, urging the enforcement of their sabbatical ordinances on us poor Mosaical people; but, though they display the most wily cunning, and pervert every respectable term to give colour to their machinations, the public view their efforts as merely the last gaspings of expiring despotism.

72. The knowledge of Nature and morality can alone promote happiness and practical virtue; religious delusion and hypocrisy will in future be held only to characterize fools.

73. Many men who display, in arguments on common topics, a rich train of philosophical, unbroken reasoning, supported by all proofs, and illustrated with all analysis, devote themselves at the shrine of religious folly. It is lamentable to see a man descend from the exalted pinnacle of reason into the miry slough of fanatical frenzy.

74. It is curious enough to observe a man, of correct sense in all other respects, bewildering himself amid absurd or divine doctrines; sometimes strenuously attempting to sustain sophisms the most extravagant, and at others, eluding their exposure by the affectation of irony in his pretence of joining in the laugh against them.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER IX.

MORALS AND PHILOSOPHY—THE TRUTHS OF NATURE—THE DOCTRINES OF UNCORRUPTED REASON—HUMAN RELATIONS THE SOURCE OF MORAL DUTIES.

1. To arrive at universal truth ; to avoid the established errors of localities ; and to become free from the continuous errors of previous ages—are the primary duties of all men who aspire to the attributes of wisdom.

2. He who knows whence he comes, where he is, and whither he tends—he, and he alone, is wise.

3. Sagacity in selecting the truth, and courage to honour it, according to its degree, determine our own degree of goodness.

4. Nothing which is not positively vicious, can be disgraceful ; for a man of liberal education and polished manners will give a degree respectability to whatever he undertakes, and may remove the prejudices which are attached to things not essentially nor positively dishonourable.

5. That which gives us courage, and frees us from dread of public opinion, is the certainty that we have done no wrong ; we fear not men so long as our conscience reproaches us not ; they might make us tremble if we had lost this support.

6. There is a confidence imparted by innocence, which defies danger, and which battles with resentment, no matter how terrific its shape or its magnitude.

7. There is a greatness which is independent of men and of the applause of the world ; it consists in the internal consciousness of our merit and rectitude, and our sense of it grows stronger the less justice is rendered to it.

8. Knowledge hath had its martyrs, and religion hath made them. Men, who know the world, ought to make up their minds to endure, though not to deserve reproach.

9. That individual, who makes himself conspicuous, on account of his principles and opinions, should be careful to render his moral character as unimpeachable as possible ; otherwise he may injure the cause which he may intend to serve, more materially than one who is opposed to him in sentiment : exemplary good conduct is the best mode of recommending our doctrines.

10. He who displays the mighty banner of morals and philosophy, should make a good and honourable life the prelude and sequel of his sentiments. In a desperate hope, the clergy attack the lives of some of the less virtuous well informed men; and all that ingenuity, quickened by malice, can sweep together, is enlisted in their crusade against liberty of thinking; yet they constantly affect to reprove those who confound their own tenets with the depravity, meanness, and arrogance of priests.

11. Some, who call their adversaries philosophers, to stigmatize them, have reproached those whose efforts have been calculated to relieve the earth from the curses of ambition and war; and, although "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks"—and such things, in Isaiah and Micah are divine communications—the same doctrines, promulged by Condorcet, Priestley, or Owen, have been denounced as the eager means of anarchy and rebellion; and, in modern times, those who promulgate them are "fantastic schemers."

12. It is the prerogative of the unenlightened or the villainous, to substitute scurrility for facts and arguments. Deist, atheist, and such silly names, are graces of elocution appropriated by divines and those led by them.

13. It is the duty of every one who possesses a regard for his character, to use all his efforts in order to free himself from any calumny, obloquy, or error tending to injure him in the estimation of society.

14. Amid the war of fraud, injustice, and fable, against reason, right, and verity, shall we stand neuter? Awed by an idea of prudent cowardice, shall our tongues and pens rest in shameless inactivity, while knavery and folly stride triumphant?

15. Independence of mind is that indifference about what the world may think or say of us, which results from a consciousness of having ever acted as becomes honest and virtuous men; and no quality of the mind is more to be admired, or more conducive to our happiness. That disregard for the opinions of our fellow-men concerning us, which springs from any other source, is as much to be reprobated as this is to be approved. He who is so low in degradation, as to be dead to the admonitions of conscience, and regardless of the estimation in which his character is held by the virtuous and enlightened, is truly a deplorable spectacle.

16. That regard for public opinion, which simply consists in the fear of being blamed for improper conduct, springs from a pure source; but, unhappily, the dread of the public is but too often a weakness of mind which makes us afraid of opposing the public folly, or incurring the disapprobation of those with whom we live; and then, if it be not a vice, it is an immense fault and meanness of spirit.

17. The doctrine of uncorrupted reason, or the knowledge of realities, has, at all times, been proscribed as injurious to the very existence

of society; while, in fact, it is only injurious to the existence of religion—the interests of priests.

18. The science of Nature is a point of knowledge not easily attained, nor to be attained, under the present system of education, without much independent mental labour.

19. All the world are not qualified even to doubt; there must be knowledge to arrive at that, and force to hold there. It is easier to admit than to examine; and, for this very reason, the mentally indolent are credulous; they are disinclined to make the effort necessary to arrive at scepticism. It is easier to act from habit than from principle, and the indolent are commonly the unreflecting slaves of habits once acquired. When one idea has followed any other idea one or more times, these ideas will become associated independently of all reflection. Thus it is, that as ideas precede and produce actions, sequences of action, or in other words *habits*, are formed, and thus it happens that the influence of habit becomes independent of reason. Men often act as they have been accustomed, only because it requires, to break the chain of habit, an effort which they feel disinclined to make. These creatures of habit are the weakest sort of men, from whom little good can be expected.

20. Let us compare this same reasoner and man of science with the spiritualist or superstitionist. The priest depends upon authority; gainsaying confounds, and reduces him to naught; he advances no arguments, only imposes dogmas, and if he attempts to syllogise on these, it is by means of flimsy sophistries and dishonourable misrepresentations, beneath the notice of the reasoner, if it were not his duty to expose their fallacy. The serious and just thinker, acquainted with the foundation of his opinions in eternal Nature, demonstrates their purity and entire veracity, and comes forward, if religious despotism crushes him not, with all the confidence of honesty and truth—soon to convince the world, that, of rationalist and dogmatist, the latter only is dangerous, the former alone is honourable.

21. Bacon says, “Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to practical moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men; therefore, atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men prudent and content, as limiting their views to this life; and we see the times inclined to atheism were civil times; but superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile* that ravisheth all the spheres of government.”

22. Pliny thus professes himself an atheist:—“I consider the question of deity must be attributed to human weakness. It is satisfactory to know that possibilities are limited to Nature. A god could not inflict on himself death, even if he should wish to die; he cannot prevent the death of man, nor raise him from the dead; he has no power over the past; he cannot prevent twice ten from being twenty, &c. From which it is clearly apparent that the powers of Nature are all.”

23. The only practical system of belief is that which trusts every thing to reason, or natural fact, and hesitates when it can go no farther ; it is founded in utility, and confirmed by experience.

24. We should remember that knowledge, manners, and virtue, constitute the only moral difference among human beings.

25. Conduct is a test always found as good for a man's principles as professions.

26. The conduct which injures ourselves is imprudent and unreasonable ; that which injures others is unjust and criminal.

27. To each duty performed there is attached a degree of mental peace and high consciousness of honourable exertion, corresponding with the difficulty of the task accomplished.

28. It is asserted, by the credulous, that the reflecting man, with all his study and philosophy, finds himself still in a maze of doubt and difficulty. This statement is untrue. Useless, indeed, would be the search of the cautious reasoner for the principles of wisdom, if, after all his arduous intellectual application, those principles were entirely undiscovered.

29. It is true, the number of atheists, if it be correct to designate by a term relating to a deity, those who have not an idea of that fiction—to give a name relating to an artificial thing to him who has no ideas, but those which exist in natural perceptions—the number of such is inconsiderable, because enthusiasm has dazzled the human mind, and the establishment of error has been so tyrannical, that few men have had courage to search for truth. If, by atheists, are meant those who, guided by experience and the evidence of their senses, see nothing in Nature but what really exists ; if, by atheists, are meant natural philosophers, who think every thing may be accounted for by the laws of motion, without having recourse to a chimerical power ; if, by atheists, are meant those who know not what a spirit is, and who reject a phantom, whose ascribed opposed qualities only disturb mankind—doubtless there are many atheists, and their number would be greater were the knowledge of physics and the sound exercise of reason more generally disseminated.

30. The doctrine of the eternity, by tending to subvert the folly, superstition, and prejudices of the times, will teach us to distinguish moral excellence from vices dignified by that title, and to regard, as injurious to society, those false and dangerous tenets which occasion us to look upon as less estimable than ourselves, those myriads of the human species who differ from us in trifling ceremonies or observances, or totally reject our crude and intolerant doctrines and superstitions. The moral obligations have their foundation in the nature of things—the preservation of life, and the relative interests of man in society. So far are adventitious systems, or the dogmas of superstition, from assisting us to embrace good or reject evil, that they most materially injure the cause of virtue, by rendering the characters of good and evil less perspicuous and distinct.

31. Atheism is founded on justice, science, and truth. To man

alone must the atheist be amenable, and his conduct alone must lead him to honour, peace, and happiness, or render him at once despicable and miserable. He has no dark cloak of hypocrisy to serve as a subterfuge for vice to shelter under. He admits no mysterious providence to mislead him; no god that forgives crimes, nor devils that torture moral innocence; no dogmas to clog his senses and forbid the improvement of mind; no imagining of immortal identities to torment his present existence.

32. Conceive for a moment that the belief of a god were altogether expunged from the world. The machine of society would still be kept up; on the face of it, we should still meet with the same gradations of character, and the same varied distribution of praise among the individuals who compose it; we should still find ourselves in the midst of a moral variety of character; and man, sitting in judgment over it, would say of some that they are good, and of others, that they are evil; the eye of the sentimentalist would still expatiate among beauteous and interesting spectacles—amiable mothers shedding their graceful tears over the tomb of departed infancy; high toned integrity maintaining itself unsullied amid the allurements of corruption; benevolence plying its labours of usefulness; and patriotism earning its proud reward in the testimony of an approving people. Here, then, we have *compassion, natural affection, justice, and public spirit*—what is there, then, in this word *godliness* that it should be necessary to the world? Why stigmatize the region of atheism as *desolate*?

33. Mankind have but one correct guide by which every action may be rightly steered, and that is *morality*, or the rule of action that at once respects both self and others.

34. Locke says, “The moral science is capable of being demonstrated.”

35. Morals differ from customs, in so far as the former is strictly the science of human happiness, while the latter is the result of habit and example, often formed we not how, and as often unwholesome as wholesome.

36. People should retain the prejudices of custom, that they may act like men; but should get rid of the prejudices of the understanding, in order to act like wise men.

37. Use only renders abuse familiar, and thus evil, sanctioned by custom, is the more reprehensible.

38. In all determinations of morality, this circumstance of public utility is ever principally in view; and, whatever disputes arise, either in philosophy or common life, concerning the bounds of duty, the question cannot be decided with greater certainty than by ascertaining, on any side, the true interests of mankind.

39. Just in the same manner as a geometrical proposition is necessarily derived from certain elementary principles, which admit not of being disputed, a moral maxim, to be correct, must be found, when

analysed, to be derived from some simple truths, which truths must be palpable.

40. To weigh the merit and demerit of human actions is, to judge of their tendency to produce good or evil—to excite pleasurable or painful feelings in ourselves or others.

41. Take account of the social principles as they exist in the bosom of man : you there find compassion for the unfortunate ; the shame of detection in anything mean or disgraceful ; the desire of standing well in the opinion of others ; the kindlier charities which shed a mild and quiet lustre over the walks of domestic life ; and the wider principles of patriotism and public usefulness. These are the principles which give rise to the varied hues of character among mankind. Some possess them in no sensible degree, and they are pointed at with abhorrence, as the most monstrous and depraved of the species ; others take their station among the undistinguished characters of society ; and others display themselves the kind, the amiable, the upright, whose hearts swell with honourable feeling, and whose pulses beat high in the pride of integrity.

42. Morality, having only for its objects the self-preservation of man and his welfare in society, has nothing to do with religious systems. Man, from his own experience, finds motives for moderating his passions, and resisting his vicious inclinations, and for rendering himself useful and estimable to those of whom he constantly stands in need. Morality is founded upon Nature and experience.

43. Nothing is more simple, clear, and easy to discover and recognise than duty, truth, virtue ; and everything that is obscure and embarrassing, and which stands in need of great arguments to sustain it, is pure falsehood, as is the half, at least, of the *truths* received by all the world, and which no one that reflects believes.

44. The necessity of justice to the support of society is the sole foundation of that virtue ; and, since no moral excellence is more highly esteemed, we may conclude that this circumstance of usefulness has, in general, the strongest energy and most entire command over our sentiments. It must, therefore, be the source of a considerable part of the merit ascribed to humanity, benevolence, friendship, public spirit, and other social virtues of that stamp ; and it is the sole source of the moral approbation paid to fidelity, veracity, integrity, and those other estimable, useful qualities and principles.

45. As much as we value our own happiness and welfare, as much must we value the practice of justice and humanity, by which alone the social confederacy can be maintained, and every man reap the fruits of mutual protection and assistance.

46. The love of justice is, in most men, only a desire to avoid injustice toward themselves.

47. The more we habituate ourselves to an accurate scrutiny of the moral species, the more delicate feelings do we acquire of the most minute distinctions between vice and virtue.

48. If, therefore, usefulness be a source of moral sentiment, and if this usefulness be not always with reference to self, it follows, that everything which contributes to the happiness of society recommends itself strictly to our approbation and good will.

49. Here is a principle which accounts, in great part, for the origin of morality ; and why need we seek for abstruse and remote systems, when there occurs one so obvious and natural?

50. The consistent moralist listens to the dictates of natural principle, and complies with the demands of conscience.

51. What morality can ever serve any useful purpose, unless it can show that all the duties which it recommends are also the true interests of every individual?

52. They who deny utility to be the basis of morals, bewilder themselves in metaphysical or religious refinements, which they fancy they comprehend, because they are unintelligible—according to the old maxim of faith, “*Credo quia impossibile est.*” (*I believe it because of its very impossibility.*)

53. Morality, simply considered as the bond of society, has no more to do with a future life than it had with a past one ; men seldom act in the common concerns of the world from the hope of a distant and uncertain reward—they feel impelled by something more immediate and forcible.

54. The laws which must ever govern human nature exist in that nature itself. Man being what he is, his nature determines his morality ; inasmuch as it determines the effect which every external or internal influence shall produce for good or for evil. If for good, that influence is virtuous ; if for evil, it is vicious. Having discovered what impressions afford him true and permanent enjoyment, and what influences occasion to him painful sensations—thence let us deduce his rules of conduct.

55. All the philosophy and all the religion in the world will never be able to carry us beyond the usual course of experience, or give us measures of conduct and behaviour different from those which are furnished by reflections on common life. No new fact can be inferred from the religious hypothesis ; no event foreseen or foretold ; no reward or punishment expected or dreaded beyond what is already known by practice and observation.

56. The law of Nature is a supreme, invariable, and uncontrollable rule of conduct to all men, the violation of which is avenged by natural punishments necessarily flowing from the very constitution of things, and equally fixed and invariable with the order of Nature itself. It is enforced by shame, remorse, infamy, misery, &c.

57. It must be by painful experience that moral error can be corrected.

58. Moral conduct springs from the mutual wants and interests of mankind. It is each man's interest that his neighbour should be virtuous ; hence, each man knows that the public opinion will approve his conduct, if virtuous—reprobate it, if vicious.

59. Nothing can preserve untainted the genuine principles of morals in our judgment of human conduct, but the absolute necessity of those principles to the existence of society.

60. Truth and virtue alone can be the bonds of union, on which man can rely.

61. Whenever men distinctly perceive, and whenever legislators act upon the perception, that *virtue and vice exist solely with reference to the nature of human beings*—then may we expect to see truth and reason prevail in the world. Those rules of conduct only can rightly be called laws, which regulate human actions alike on one day, as on another day. In a nation calling itself a Republic, the laws of Moses should have no validity in courts of law, to authorize persecution for breaches of superstitious customs. Our highest object, and the end of our endeavours, should be to free our country from the oppressive exercise of religious tests in all judicial proceedings, and from the Sunday penalties, which violate the simple and imprescriptible rights of man. The tyranny of priests is even more odious and insufferable than that of kings. The attempt to justify the violation of natural liberty because the majority adhere to those Mosaical prescriptions which occasion it, only enhances the crime.

62. 'Tis a high hoax that—that priests should drive into alliance morals and religion; should cause it to be believed, that what is unnatural is true, and that pious imbecility only is goodness; as though falsehood and goodness, Nature and illusion, credulity and reason, were not opposites in all respects.

63. When the priests and their dupes say, that “the dogma of future rewards and punishments is the bond of society, and that to overthrow this dogma of the evangelical economy would free three parts of the Christian world from restraint, they might with truth rather say, that their impositions would be overthrown, and that the tyrannical institutions, and exercise of priestly power, would be immediately set aside. Men for their own safety are interested in the observance of the obligations of civil order, and, indeed, its infringement leads to strengthened measures for enforcing its provisions, and to their increased effect by the experience of their indispensability. He must be as great a fool who believes that there could possibly be a necessity for a general flood over the earth, to execute vengeance upon the offenders against natural morals, as he who gives credit to its physical possibility.

64. Experience teaches us, that the calamities of mankind have sprung from their religious opinions. The ignorance of natural causes created gods, and imposture made them terrible. Mankind lived unhappy, because they were taught from their infancy to think that God had condemned them to misery. They never entertained a wish to break their chains, because they were taught that devotion, the renouncing of reason, mental debility, and spiritual debasement, were the means of obtaining salvation.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER X.

MOTIVES OF ACTION—OUR DESIRES, OUR INTERESTS, OR THE PASSION OF SELF LOVE, THE MAIN SPRING OF HUMAN CONDUCT, TEMPERED BY THE NATURAL PASSIONS OF SYMPATHY, BENEVOLENCE, AND HIGH MINDEDNESS—THE VIRTUES—APPEAL TO THE HONOUR AND SENSIBILITY OF MANKIND, TO ACQUAINT THEMSELVES WITH THE TRUE CONDITION OF THEIR EXISTENCE, AND JUSTLY APPRECIATE THE FRUITION OF HUMANITY.

1. Self love, when it is not an absolute and exclusive sentiment, is the origin of all our virtues. All is modification of self love, from the love of life to the contempt of death.

2. Interest, which is accused of all our crimes, deserves generally the praise of our virtues.

3. There is a refined and a gross self love; the former derives pleasure from the pleasures of others—the latter, solely from ourselves.

4. We see in man passions which he has in common with the brutes, and which consist of animal wants become excessive; he has others which are social wants grown to excess. If our necessities develop the intellect, the passions are the principle or cause of every thing great which man performs, whether good or bad.

5. It is difficult to survey the powers and properties of human nature without perceiving a similarity and relationship which defy the ingenuity of misanthropic sarcasm to refute.

6. That prompting and sustaining power—indignation against wrong—is the counterpart of zeal for right, the aliment of high feeling, the generator and supporter of that noble enthusiasm, without which, no one is able to accomplish any great moral undertaking.

7. The virtues are, for the most part, the children of self interest; and industry, calmness, moderation, and heroism, in misfortune and in torments, are no more than the art and faculty of confining the agitations of violent and tumultuous passions. Sincerity itself is often no more than an artful kind of dissimulation.

8. Generosity, by which he who gives and he who is only a spectator, are equally dazzled, is, especially on signal occasions, no more than ambition disguised; an artful refinement of self-interest, or the vanity of giving, which we prefer to what we give.

9. Pride on the one hand, shame on the other, and the natural dispositions of our organs, nerves, and fibres, produce the most brilliant virtues; and the man who swells with self-applause and pride, would often blush if he knew the principles of his great actions.

10. The sentiment we suppose we feel, is very different from that by which we are really actuated. The great actions which historians and politicians consider as the effect of a great design, or of great courage, often owe their birth to the ridiculous convulsions of humours and passions.

11. There is so much of base alloy in our very best thoughts, that it is melancholy work to criticise too closely the motives of our most worthy actions; at least, it might be recommended to every one to let those of his neighbour pass current, however narrowly he may examine the purity of his own.

12. Something selfish will often mingle with our noblest and purest emotions.

13. The practice of virtue often proceeds from an inability to obey the dictates of vice; it often happens that our weakness is a better protection than our force or reason; we think we are virtuous when we are only weak.

14. The vices, by crossing and succeeding each other in their turns, are reciprocally weakened and destroyed; and this is one of the principal causes of the eternal contradictions of the human mind.

15. They who would have us follow virtue for its own sake, independent of any pleasure or advantage that we may find in the pursuit, are visionaries who build a theory without examining the grounds on which they build it, and advance doctrines without examining principles.

16. Our pleasures, or which is the same thing, our interests, are the natural objects to which every man, according to his constitution, attaches happiness. Compelled to judge of actions from their effects upon ourselves, we approve of the interests which animate others according to the advantages which they produce to the human species. Thus, we admire bravery, generosity, and talents; and this admiration and sympathy impel our own generous and energetic efforts.

17. It is the nature of man to love himself, to preserve his existence, and render it happy. Experience and reason soon convince him that he cannot, alone, command the means of gratification. He sees other human beings engaged in the same pursuit, yet capable of assisting him to attain his desired object. He perceives that they will favour his views so far only as those coincide with their own interests or wishes. He will then conclude that, to secure his own happiness, he must conciliate their attachment, approbation, and concurrence, and that it is necessary to make them find advantages in promoting his views. He sees what is agreeable or disagreeable to them, and these experiences give him the idea of justice, &c. The procuring these advantages to mankind constitutes virtue. Virtue is

nothing more than the art of rendering a man happy, by contributing to the happiness of others. Merit and virtue are founded upon the nature and wants of man. Both virtue and vice rest only upon relations subsisting among all human beings.

18. Men are now cured of their passion for hypotheses and systems in natural philosophy, and will hearken to no arguments but those derived from experience. It is full time that they should begin a like reformation in all moral disquisitions, and reject every system of ethics, however subtle and ingenious, which is not founded on fact and observation.

19. The existing generation is thirsting for knowledge, and, above all, for ideas fixed and positive; the human mind, in the present age, desires the only repose and satisfaction that are honourable and durable—the repose and satisfaction yielded by the knowledge of the truth.

20. There is now a superabundance of facts to remove all doubt from every mind, and the principles may now be fully developed which will easily explain the source of all the opinions which perplex and divide the world; and their source being discovered, mankind may withdraw all those which are false and injurious, and prevent any evil arising in consequence of the varieties of sentiments, or rather of feelings which may afterwards remain.

21. Although we may consider hypocrisy and enthusiasm as fit food for ridicule and satire, yet we may be sensible of the difficulty of holding fanaticism up to laughter or abhorrence, without using colouring which may give offence to those who are sincerely worthy, though prejudiced and mistaken in their views.

22. If mankind were universally and seriously occupied in the study of the laws of intellectual power, such a degree of thought and sympathy would be generated, as to dispense with altars and thrones over all the world. The controversies of sectarian creeds and factious policy, supported by penal laws to suppress thought and inquiry, are the causes of eternal discord, and of the present defective state of the human intellect.

23. All the past and present institutions of the world are a proof of the everchanging insanity with which the popular mind has been possessed. Man is born in ignorance, and, from his birth, he is surrounded with the errors of some sect, some class, frequently of some party, and always of some country. His natural wishes are to press onwards towards happiness; but he is strongly and successfully opposed by the multitudes around him, and by the ignorantly and improperly devised institutions of society. He is compelled to be insincere, and this circumstance alone will destroy human happiness.

24. We cannot expect to take away from a whole nation its religious ideas, because they have been inculcated from the tenderest infancy. But the public, in the long run, may reap advantages from labours, of which they at present have no idea. Reason, having truth

on its side, will gradually insinuate itself into the mind, and become familiar to man.

25. Let us be indulgent towards the opinions and habits of our fellow-men, each of whom is the passive instrument of perverted education and associations : let us not despise others, either for ignorance, or for errors, in the formation of character, arising from the vices of society, or the prejudices established in youth.

26. O, men! Ignorant on the simplest subjects, how indulgent ought ye to be towards the opinions of others! Why persecute, defame, and burn him who cannot believe that three make but one; that a little flour and water is flesh and blood—a cake God; that a mother should remain a virgin; that a star travelled from the East Indies into Arabia without being seen by any except those whom it served as a link; that darkness covered the earth on a day when everybody saw clearly, except the writer of the falsehood, &c.?

27. Is the present race any worse for being but a little wiser than their ancestors? The unbounded exercise of sorcery and witchcraft was never once disputed among our almost immediate forefathers; a belief of their extended influence formed, indeed, an important branch of their superstition! And it is a well known fact, that in those days, a number of the human species, scarcely to be credited, fell the innocent and unhappy victims to such groundless and melancholy dreams and prejudices. In the reign of Louis XIV. the belief in vampyres was general among the Christians, and Luther's writings show that he was well acquainted with the nature of killcrops.

28. How miserable are men thus superstitious and unenlightened! They come into being under the unfortunate influence of those mistaken and dangerous tenets that have been solemnly sanctioned as truths the most sacred and unquestionable.

29. Can it, at this day, injure the morals of society, or the interests of mankind, to make them still a little wiser than they are—to divest them of a part of their folly, and prevent them from falling again into groundless and false impressions, tending to destroy, or at least set them at variance with one another?

30. What is there in this natural state of existence, that a man should degrade himself by a base and dishonourable acquiescence in tenets, which he is convinced are ill-founded and dangerous to society? And why should truth be suppressed, because it flatters not the grossness of the conceptions, and the reigning prejudices of the multitude—only serving the interests of the priesthood? Such, however, is the force and excellence of truth, that, to the unprejudiced mind, it requires but to be known in order to be admired: though it should then meet with the approbation but of few individuals, yet the approbation of the wise and good is ever to be preferred to that of the multitude. The greatest and most illustrious characters that have enlightened the world, have generally fallen a sacrifice to the despotism of tyrannical superstition, or to the madness and folly of mankind. What pains are not taken to stop the inlets of all know-

ledge, to blind or confuse the people's minds. What innumerable tracts, whose contents are absurdities, are eagerly circulated among the undiscerning multitude! The few who have written in a rational and consistent manner, and whose clear discernment and improved understandings have raised them above the ordinary level of mankind—how have they been too often requited? Ignorance discovers not the excellence, nor the truth of their observations; or, because they differ from the unenlightened part of the human species, they expose themselves to the disapprobation and the censures of the priest-led multitude.

31. Priests say that their religion recommends universal philanthropy; they pretend to teach peace and benevolence, and are the instigators of tests, persecutions, and violence. They assert that philosophy never taught such kind sentiments as their creeds: are they more ignorant, or more impudent? They enslave mankind, and at the same time beguile them with the name of freedom. They assume the tone of solemnity, and what more easy for knaves? They speak of righteousness, and holiness, and love of men's precious souls, and filch from them their money, which they so greedily covet. Their lives are not very consistent, to be sure—but what signifies that? Nobody is free and virtuous enough to notice it. They bless, they curse, by turns, as they think may answer their purpose. They succeed in making men dupes, and that is their business. They practice on the weakness, the credulity, the ignorance, and the passions of mankind: this brings lucre to the pulpit. Priesthood is a trade founded on human credulity. Those who are faithful to Nature, and whose benevolence inclines them to impart the advantage of knowing the truth to their fellow-men, call for no pay: their object is not emoluments and consequence, stolen from others; but the shedding abroad the light and comfort which are experienced in their own honest hearts.

32. Another argument of their profession is, "Believe: if you be wrong, nothing will follow; if you disbelieve, you may suffer eternal tortures." The absurdity of this argument is double. They lay it down, as a rule, that a man can make himself believe any thing he pleases; they also infer that a man may be damned because he cannot believe.

33. Priests and their trade are as much to be resisted, as impostors and tyrants of every description: they proclaim their dogmas to come specially from God; then why hinder their being scrutinized? Is it supposable that the word of man could prevail against the word of God? Shallow, vain, villanous egotist! Human nature, most of all depraved in the priesthood, uses the vilest means to secure its dominion.

34. Religion has been reputed consolatory, because the wretched are most abject in their faith. That the prospects of hereafter are not delightful to believers, may be pronounced from the anxiety with which they protract life through all the changes of sickness, langour,

decrepitude, and sorrow. Were they happy in their hopes, they would hail the approach of death as the harbinger of consummate felicity.

35. What is the state of believers? The religious societies, who give decided testimonies of their belief, (for acquiescence in an established faith differs widely from conviction,) are of the most melancholy and splenetic habits; and those who ponder over their creeds with peculiar earnestness, are wretched, diseased, and their thwarting features betray the deformity of their minds. Pascal, the great mathematician, was the most melancholy of wretches. St. Pierre hinted at his own derangement, and said that he could not hope for happiness even in fancy.

36. It is a well known fact, that the precise and exact often expect death with the uneasiest feelings. Those who suffered the severest discipline, whose days were spent in prayer, and whose dreams were adoration, have shrunk from the grave with agonies more distracting, and felt pangs at its approach more alarming, than wretches the most abandoned. Granting that many draw their consolations from a sincere trust in the intelligence they fancy superior to humanity—is that a plea for the oppression exercised under the influence of the ministers of their superstitions? Those manly and firm principles produced by education and correct knowledge of Nature, will sustain us in every contingent vicissitude of our lives; and they who are brought up in this knowledge, will never be reduced to the deplorable weakness of having recourse to the superstitious utterance of prayers and psalms, in order to obtain the delusive relief supplied to the imagination by prostration before the dread object of religion. Whatever be the fancied object of worship—a mother virgin, the great triune one, or the moon—superstitious weakness deludes itself with the persuasion that the favour and interest of a powerful being has been obtained.

37. Amid the hundreds who have triumphed in the glorious prospect of future reward, the millions of believers who cling to life with the tenacity of despair, and die with doubt and apprehension, are not noticed. To them all is dark, dreary, and unfathomable—replete with terror and apprehended torment.

38. Nothing but enthusiastic folly can induce a man to prefer improbable conjectures, attended with uncertainty and insupportable fears, to an evident system of positive morality and physical certainty, which must confirm and set the mind at rest.

39. A superficial or shallow state of the mind may be fitted for resting in satisfied ignorance under the extravagant and credulous illusions of superstitious faith and hope; but, can the delusive notions of pious and unreflecting simpletons, more often perplexed and suffering under events regarded as severity of infliction, than consoled and elevated by receiving as blessing their more favourable experience in life; can this state be compared with that sound and certain satisfaction and natural happiness afforded by knowledge derived from

reason and conviction, and a sense of moral innocence? Reason says, "prize existing enjoyments." Blind prejudiced, and misanthropic passion says, "there is no enjoyment on earth;" cheats itself out of the present and deludes itself with the vain prospect of amends to be made hereafter for the misery it creates for itself here. Who, acquainted with realities, ever wished they had remained in pious imbecility? Who, but a pious fool, would wish to be the dupe of an irrational imagination leading into silly credulity, doubt, darkness, and fear, rather than advance with a clear mind into the full light of reason and truth? Whoever is impressed with the notion that a state of pain and distress in the world is only endurable by means of prospective joys to recompense it in a fictitious elysium, and is not aware that an acquaintance with the actual condition of our being supplies fortitude to support even extreme endurance with knowledge of and reconciliation to the circumstances by which it has necessarily or naturally happened, cannot have passed beyond the babyhood of self delusion. The man of knowledge is tired and disgusted by the croaking note constantly repeated to him by canting folly, that his principles are insufficient to serve and solace him in the hour of trial and death—which note continues to be uttered in spite of the instances constantly occurring to convince any thing but a religious blockhead that a man of sense and virtue, aware of death producing the actual termination of his sensations, can view the approach of such event calmly and satisfactorily.

40. All the essays to prove the truth of the Christian religion have been tissues of sophistries and deceptions, only calculated to confuse the mind, and prevent its escape from the fold of priestly error.

41. Unprincipled priests have sustained their craft by enforcing faith in ridiculous and demonstrated falsehoods.

42. Every man should beware of him who uses means to inspire him with terrors; of him who would possess him with fears in order to reduce him to subserviency, for his own ends. Whoever attempts to operate upon an innocent heart, by exciting dread of pretended supernatural influence, does it with a sinister purpose.

43. O ye who are acquainted with the real conditions of your nature! O ye who are believers in the truth! banish overwhelming terrors from your hearts. Cease to contemplate futurity. Live for yourselves and your fellow-beings. Your pleasures are allowable, while they neither injure yourselves or others. Dry up the tears of distressed worth and injured innocence. Let the mild fervour of friendship, and the esteem of beloved companions, make you set light on the pains of life. Be just, since equity supports the human race. Be kind, as bounty attaches every heart. Be indulgent, since you live among beings weak like yourselves. Be modest, as pride hurts the self-love of every human being. Pardon injuries, as vengeance makes the heart cankered. Be moderate, temperate, and chaste, since voluptuousness, intemperance, and excess will destroy your health, and render you contemptible.

44. The wicked may escape human laws, but can never fly from natural consequences. Abandon yourselves to intemperance, and you will shorten your existence. If addicted to vice, you will perish under fatal habits. Look into the hearts of those wretches whose countenances would disguise their anguished consciences. See the covetous miser, haggard and emaciated, groaning under wealth acquired by the sacrifice of himself. View the gay voluptuary, secretly suffering under a broken constitution. See the liar, deprived of all confidence: the icy heart of ingratitude, which no acts of kindness can dissolve; the iron soul of the inexorable, whom the sight of misfortune could never soften; the vindictive, nourishing in his bosom the gnawing vipers that consume him. Observe the sleep of the murderer, the iniquitous judge, or the oppressor, whose couches are surrounded by the torches of the furies. Avoiding their errors, and finding your bosoms the constant abodes of peace, you will be happy in the enjoyment of satisfaction and self congratulation.

45. If we are not honest, benevolent, virtuous, and charitable, we can never enjoy the sweets of life. The storms of passion will embitter our happiest moments; our unjust practices will deprive us of our best friends; our uncharitable feelings will disgust our most devoted admirers; and our vicious habits, contracted probably in early life, through the neglect of our instruction, will scarcely fail to bring utter ruin on our families—forever banish happiness from our bosoms, and entail nameless miseries on our innocent, injured wives and children.

46. The free exercise of our reason in the pursuits of physical and moral truth, has but a tendency to support the cause of genuine virtue and humanity; to shake the inveterate and malevolent prejudices of mankind; to assuage the remaining turbulence of ignorance and error: and thus to smooth the way to that civilization and refinement, which not only enliven and give peculiar relish to the precious moments of existence, but essentially contribute to the peace, safety, and welfare of the human family.

47. Among the capricious weaknesses of humanity, that one is particularly remarkable which inclines us to esteem persons and things not by their real value, so much as by the opinion of others, who are often very incompetent judges.

48. The happiness of needing to consult none other than our own conscience, can only be known to him who has become sufficiently enlightened. Whoever needs the countenance of other persons' opinions to confirm his own, can know no real satisfaction and confidence.

49. The faculty of deciding with confidence, is only to be found in that man whose own experience has proved to him the truth of acknowledged maxims—in him, finally, who feels in his positive knowledge, a conviction of the infallibility of his judgment.

50. Simplicity and truth are to be found only among the few whose imagination is regulated by study and reflection.

51. Philosophy depends on argument; superstition on credulity:

the one rests on the uniform experience of things ; the other on their violation. Philosophy does not parley with the apprehension of the timid ; it does not press into its service denunciations of eternal and excruciating vengeance ; its professors are not supplied by revenues extorted from the prime necessities of the people ; it requires no statutes villainously foisted into the legal code, to protect its tenets from disquisition—for truth and freedom, not falsehood and tyranny, are its aim.

52. Love of truth never raised a persecution. Persecution springs from the ambitious desire to govern the opinion of others, and thus convert them to their interested uses ; and a religious ambition is by far the worst, the most rancorous, the most hateful and unreasonable specimen of its kind that ever infested the world ; it is a direct violation of the rights of conscience—an atrocious and infamous invasion of the rights of man. A man wishes to compel me to think as he does, in order that I may subserve his purposes ; not regarding my right to express my opinions being the same as he has to express his own : his opinions must be established ; mine not dared to be uttered.

53. It is to experience and truth that we ought to have recourse, in providing remedies for those evils which are incident to our species. There, too, must be sought those motives which give the heart inclinations useful to society.

54. Every principle ascertained, is a body of evidence against lies, and prodigies, and perdition.

55. Forbid it, that any process of philosophy were capable to sear and indurate our feelings ; that nothing should interest or agitate them but what arose instantly and immediately out of our own selfish interests.

56. We reject not sensibility from among the other qualities that operate in us towards making us good and happy. If the absence of sympathy, the want of fellow feeling, as regards the participation of others in our sensations, be a curse the most dreadful that can happen to humanity,—the same absence and want, as regards our participation in the sensations of others, are (if the expression may be allowed) more dreadful still ; for they are certain, and speedily, to produce the first ; and they possess all their own gloomy, impressive, self concentration besides. The first want of humanity is sympathy and fellow feeling. We are sometimes so circumstanced that a constraining sentiment of humanity impels us to act without permitting us to reflect, much less to calculate.

57. We harden ourselves in vain, to treat, with the indifference they deserve, the changes of the world ; we strive ineffectually to be the self sufficing, invulnerable being : the stoical exemption, affected over the pains and vexations of human life, is as imaginary as the state of mystical quietism and submission aimed at by some crazy enthusiasts :—

“ ———— and, if I weep,
’Tis that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy.”

58. A certain class of metaphysicians have attempted to form opinions and trace the connexion between moral causes and effects : to subject the mind to a certain fatality, these have arrogated the name of necessarians ; and they even have carried their extravagance so far as to say that thought is a material product of the brain.

59. The doctrines of fatalism, when it means the will of an overruling sentimental power, influencing the circumstances that operate upon our condition in life, like predestination, sears the human conscience, by representing our actions as the result of an inevitable will, impelling man to act as a mere instrument in the hands of an intelligent operator.

60. Dry fatalism, or that recurring coincidence, which makes men connect their good and evil fortunes with particular days, months, or years, is another of the baits with which superstition angles for her vassals.

61. To state that, because exterior objects have formed our conscience, all our impressions are so linked with one another, that the exercise of the will is but an additional fatality and not justly blameable, whatever be the action, is false ; for the sense of duty is the strongest impression imposed by those objects, and every act of perversity and disregard of that duty is deservedly punishable, and committed with that conviction by the offender himself.

62. Wicked men impute their actions to a malign horoscope or some prescribed series of events, in order to abate, if possible, the agonies of their conscience.

63. Vicious indulgence is not less discreditable to the head, than dull and disappointing to the heart ; not less culpable as a crime, than contemptible as a proof of stupidity. There is no felicity so pure, no joy so unfailling, as those which spring from the self satisfaction of virtue.

64. Alas ! how insufficient are all human efforts in the attainment of felicity, if these be not founded on virtue and goodness !

65. In moral security, there is that on which the mind can rest with satisfaction.

66. Calm tranquillity is all the felicity that human nature can firmly grasp or steadily retain.

67. The concurrence of every fortunate circumstance cannot produce happiness, or even tranquillity.

68. A life spent in conformity to the unclouded exertions of reason, is all that mortals can pretend to ; for immortality is as little in our power as existence was before our birth.

69. Those who follow reason, enjoy more safety and more honour, in the conflicts of life, than those who pursue the dazzling phantom of imagination.

70. Let us submit with resignation to the course of things, and yield a tranquil acquiescence with occurrences, from a consciousness of their inevitable necessity ; this does not forbid the exercise of human

virtue or wisdom, nor can it prevent or increase the operations of vice, for both are parts of the same system.

71. Reason and philosophy teach us to bear our sufferings with mildness and resignation; but religion, which attempts to make them a source of comfort to us, attempts to counteract and subdue the powers of Nature, and makes us ridiculous enthusiasts.

72. Our reason is a natural advantage, by the right use of which, we may, in most cases, better our condition, and remedy many of the evils by which we are surrounded.

73. In suffering misfortunes by the will of providence, I feel myself treated with unkindness and partiality; but in suffering under an inevitable necessity, or irresistible flow of circumstances, I experience nothing more than the common lot of all human beings. Inward peace of mind, consciousness of integrity, a satisfactory view of our own conduct—these are circumstances very requisite to happiness, and will be cherished and cultivated by every honest man who feels the importance of them.

“ ———— E’en calamity, by thought refin’d,
Inspirits and adorns the thinking mind.”

74. The constant habit of surveying ourselves, as it were in reflection, keeps alive all the sentiments of right and wrong, and begets, in noble natures, a certain reverence for themselves as well as others, which is the surest guardian of every virtue.

75. A truly thoughtful man may sometimes fall into error, but he never can become either a habitual fool, or an unprincipled knave.

76. The happiest disposition of mind is the *virtuous*; or, that which leads to action and employment, renders sensible to the social passions, steels the heart against the assaults of fortune, reduces the affections to a just moderation, makes our own thoughts an entertainment to us, and inclines us rather to the pleasures of society and conversation, than to the indulgence of the grosser senses.

77. Those persons who have not all their moments filled up by some customary occupation, and who happen to possess activity of mind, in the intervals find themselves under the imperious necessity of being stimulated by the excitement of new sensations and ideas. If we need the company of others, to escape from ennui—that listlessness and languor for which the resources of science are the only substitutes—we must submit to the tastes and the wishes of our companions, or we shall run the risk of separating ourselves from the means of filling up the void of our time, since they will not depend on ourselves.

78. We should choose for ourselves that sort of industry which requires the exercise of the mind, without fatiguing it too much—an employment that will reward us for labour by the pleasure which it affords.

79. We should be content with our Nature, and derive from life the greatest possible advantage, by means of the just use of our

faculties, and by avoiding the errors by which human evils are aggravated.

80. Without practice, duties will be neglected, principles will prove ineffectual, and maxims will be forgotten.

81. Good sense and reason ought to be the umpire of all rules.

82. Moderation, in all things, is the law of enjoyment.

83. We should become well informed, and acquainted with the relation of things in general, that we may not be the dupes and slaves of the craft and chicaneries of others, and that we may be able to act an independent part in society; and we should search deeply, that we may avoid conceit, by knowing how much of science is unknown even to the wisest.

84. It is the peculiar and characteristic faculty of superior minds, to penetrate the depth of others' attainments, and estimate their talents, by perceiving and combining those minute circumstances which escape the observation of inferior intellects, or are only seen single and unconnected. A mere survey of the man and slight opportunity for conversation, will enable one of high wrought powers of intellect to gauge accurately the mental standard, and determine the intellectual grade held by another; whereas the shallow mind is always unable to reach the depth of profounder acquirements, but always feels a sense of humiliating disparity.

85. There are men of daring and intrepid character, on whom no one that had looked, even slightly, or conversed with but momentarily, would readily venture to practise anything approaching to trick, or which required to be supported by intimidation.

86. There are men so just, whose consciences are so pure, that it is not possible to be in their company, without partaking of the blessedness, if it may be so called, which emanates from their hearts and their thoughts.

87. To be at once acute and assiduous, alert and accurate, is one of those rare combinations of talent and industry, which is seldom met with, except in the most happily constituted subjects.

88. In order to love mankind, little must be required of them. To view their faults without asperity, we must accustom ourselves to indulgence—to a sense that frail humanity has a right to expect indulgence from wisdom. The wisest men have always been the most indulgent. A profound knowledge of the human heart tends to dispose us to benevolence, to close our hearts against hatred, and open them to the principles of a humane and mild morality. A happy disposition is inclined to pity rather than condemn mankind.

89. Those who are indulgent themselves are the less disposed to excuse the want of it in others; because they discover in the opposite character more of pride than delicacy, and more inflexibility than wisdom.

90. Life would be too wretched if it were as common to commit enormities as to relate them.

91. If we wish that society should extend to us more of its sym-

pathy with our pleasures and consolations, than of its exultation at our sorrows and disappointments, we must be indulgent, and guard ourselves against selfishness and censoriousness.

92. In what we expect and require from others, we should let it be a little less than what we would do for them under the same circumstances.

93. The sentiments of those who are inclined to think favourably of mankind, are much more advantageous to virtue, than the contrary principles which give a mean opinion of our nature.

94. The great object of life is to learn what to do, and how to carry humanity forward; not to reproach any one, no, not even ourselves. We should reproach ourselves only for petty and useless feelings, and the want of a real sympathy.

95. The perfection of true wisdom, and the end of true philosophy, is to proportion our wants to our possessions, our conditions to our capacities.

96. One of the most certain means of happiness, is to know how to preserve a self-esteem, and to be able to look back upon our whole life without shame or remorse for ever having done a mean or unjust action.

97. Honour, when it means that purity of principle which preserves a man from every thing mean and contemptible in thought, word, or deed, is a valuable supplement to the law of the land, and the requirements of morality.

98. Innocence of conduct, when resulting from simplicity, is not so admirable as when, with a full knowledge of the world, and of men's depravity, hypocrisy, and vileness, the heart remains uncorrupted and generous: this virtue is truly admirable—the more exalted because it has escaped the propensity towards misanthropy—can perceive the wickedness of others, and still treat them with indulgence.

99. It requires a rare talent for discriminating and comprehensive observation of mankind, to be long familiar with the arts of the selfish and greedy, without judging harshly of the generous and disinterested.

100. In depraved hearts there is a coarseness, meanness, and callousness, the very sight of which almost shuts up the consciousness of feeling in our own.

101. Good manners have such a relation to good sense, that we do well to pay an early attention to those rules of behaviour which characterize improved society.

102. Rudeness in youth generally becomes vulgarity in age.

103. The pleasures of a reformed mind are certainly not so unalloyed and sweet as those of innocence; but it is, however, the only comfort which conscience can still give us. In a strong and sensible mind, remorse inspires the necessity of good conduct and correct habits, which diminish its bitterness.

104. They are much mistaken, who think that it is useless to

attempt instructing ourselves in an advanced period of life : such truths as we may have remained ignorant of during our earlier years, may still sometimes shed a benign influence over the closing scene of our existence.

105. All we have to do, is to occupy our intellectual faculties in calculating justly our wants ; to employ our capabilities with greatest effect in obtaining their gratification ; and, finally, we should submit ourselves to the necessity of our nature, and the inevitable conditions of our brief organization and consciousness.

106. A person, in the maturity of reason, doubts ; in disease, his prejudices revive : priests then exult, terming his former doubts pretence or audacity ; they pretend to consider dereliction of mind, by sickness or dotage, the time for sound and deliberate thinking. When the mind is enfeebled, the prejudices of infancy may recur, and strength may give place to weakness and decay ; but the mind that is well established in the principles of truth, and aware of the realities of eternal Nature, will not be likely to turn fanatic under any circumstances.

107. If the perverse and mischievous man thinks to find among the good and the sensible, who are freed from the belief in supernaturals, a party to shelter him from the disgrace he deservedly merits in society—he is none of us ; for it is not possible that a morally reflecting man should be disposed to act in a way that would commit him in his proper estimation. Wherever there is an exalted and pure sensibility to truth, there will be an exquisite and inflexible regard for goodness ; and when evil propensities prevail in the heart, no dauntless and steady independence of mind can ever be enjoyed. He who can permit himself in acts of injustice, is well punished by his dread of an avenging God, and eternal torments : to be church buffeted is no worse a suffering than a vicious man deserves.

108. It is in the power of the abusive to charge men with intentions which they never entertained—with motives which their hearts abhor. The innocent conduct of individuals may be easily misinterpreted, and such misinterpretation will be readily adopted by the prejudiced and unreflecting, who are ever willing to suit things to their own malignant purposes. It is wiser then for us, who declare the truth of everlasting Nature, by prudent, good, and regular conduct, to acquire such a character as will explain to the impartial observer, the purity of the motives by which we are actuated, in cases in which our views are ungenerously or maliciously misrepresented. We sacrifice our personal interests ; we incur the rancour of clerical malice ; we resign all that others prize as pleasures and advantages—for the sake of virtue, reason, and truth ; and we enjoy felicity unknown to the ignorant and superstitious.

109. Our lives pass away ; endless ages roll along : let the man of knowledge ever be undismayed and tranquil : it is his province to possess himself in confidence—enjoying nature by his rights and his reason.

110. Happy is he, who, at the close of his life, can look back on some monument of his genius, some act of public utility or private benevolence; or who can reflect on having constituted the happiness of the individuals of his own family, by his kindness and exertions—if he has been able to free himself from the bonds of superstitious prejudices, and has enjoyed the light of science—has looked upon Nature in its extent, and said “ ’tis all mind can”—he will then truly say with satisfaction, “ I have lived.”

111. Our main object should be to reconcile all our civil and political institutions with the actual condition of our nature, so as to derive the highest enjoyment that life affords during the term of our existence; and when this great end shall be obtained, and our natural rights and imprescriptible liberties shall be enjoyed—it must be attended with the downfall of religious despotism, and all celestial imposture and priestcraft shall

“ Dissolve at once in air at truth’s resplendant ray.”

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER XI.

MISCELLANY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS, &c.

ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED.

" La morale profite plus quand elle s'insinue dans l'ame par pensées détachées."

*" C'est en recueillant avec soin ces maximes détachées, qu'on pourra parvenir à fonder le vrai système de la morale ; comme c'est en rassemblant une longue série d'observations et d'expériences, qu'on trouvera, peut être, après une suite de siècles, le véritable système de la Nature."**

ABSENCE.

There is something fearful in returning to those we love, while yet uncertain what ills or changes long absence may have effected.

ABSENCE OF MIND.

Let the mind be never so absorbed by its own internal feelings, we have still some command over the train of ideas with which the attention is occupied.

ACCURACY.

The humble virtue of simple accuracy is not so common, nor so easily practised, as might be supposed.

ACCUSATIONS.

Such is the nature of man, that the very accusation of crime, without the proof of it, rests upon the mind, and is ever after associated with the name of the party accused, as crime itself.

*" ————— Malice scorn'd, puts out
Itself ; but argued, gives a kind of credit
To a false accusation.*

ADVERSITY.

1. Much adversity and many disappointments are generally suffered before we are able duly to estimate the objects of life.

* TRANSLATION.—We derive most advantage from moral precepts, when they are insinuated into our minds by detached thoughts.

It is by a careful combination of these scattered maxims, that we shall be able to found the true system of morality ; as it is by collecting together a long series of observations and experiences, that we shall, perhaps, after a succession of ages, find out the true system of Nature.

2. The roots of real virtue gain strength beneath the frosts of adversity.

3. There are moments of adversity, which let us into some feelings of our Nature, to which we might otherwise remain perpetual strangers: we are forced to descend into our own hearts, and disposed thereby to render justice to ourselves and others.

ADVICE.

1. A man, determined upon taking advice, should also determine to put his counsellor in possession of every thing necessary to qualify him for giving it.

2. When young men forget what is their duty, they owe deep thanks to the friend who will remind them of it.

AFFLICTIONS.

1. Sorrows and afflictions dispose the mind to the reception of impressions, which, in days of gaiety and happiness, would take no effect upon it.

2. There may be agonies of distress in which the mind is so much jarred, that it ceases to be responsive even to the feelings which have most engrossed it.

3. Perhaps there is no situation in which the mind is entirely unsusceptible of pleasure.

AFFRONTS.

He that too much refines his delicacy, will endanger his quiet. Whatever be the motive of insult, it is best to overlook it; for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect.

AGE.

1. If, with infirmity of body, comes infirmity of temper and mind, the case of the aged more strongly claims the dutiful observance of those who are bound to them in love and affection.

2. There is a time in the life of men advanced in years, when they begin to fear a failure in their faculties; but, when that time has passed, they lose all doubt of their capacity and competency.

AMBITION.

1. Were all objects of ambition looked upon closely, their advantages would be found chimerical.

2. We should avoid all those insanities of the mind engendered by unwise example and early errors—such as the passion after posthumous fame, which can seldom be realized, and can never be felt; the love of wealth beyond the means of comfortable enjoyments; the thirst for renown among beings who think not of us in sleep and in death; and the zeal of self devotion in any cause of the hour, the object and use of which will be forgotten in a year, and laughed at by the next generation.

3. To be ambitious of praise, is perfect folly and vanity.

4. The desire of fame, in those who have the ambition without the proper faculties, runs wild and discovers itself in a thousand extravagancies by which they would signalize themselves from others, and gain a set of admirers.

5. Ambition is the necessary spur of a great mind to great actions; when acting upon a weak mind, it impels it to absurdity, or sours it with discontent.

AMOUR PROPRE.

1. He who stirs up against himself another's self love, provokes the strongest passion in human Nature.

2. As we advance in life, we are taught by severe experience, that there is inconvenience, and oftentimes danger, resulting from unrestrained candour. We find that it is prudent to keep on good terms with the vanity of those around us; because, the more just the mortification felt by self love, the more implacable will be the animosity of the person so wounded.

3. So it is, that a man who has sufficient firmness to endure misfortune, and philosophy to bear with real calamities, suffers himself to be agitated by the slightest attack on his *amour propre*.

ANAXAGORAS.

Anaxagoras was persecuted by the Athenian clergy for attempting to destroy the vulgar belief in the influence of gods over Nature, by teaching that its phenomena occurred in the uncontrollable action of bodies existing with properties fixed and eternal in their kind.

ANTICIPATIONS.

1. I should have had a poor opinion of that man's heart, who had not in his youth formed romantic expectations of human virtue and happiness; but I should have a much poorer one of his head, if he did not, in maturer age, see reason to abandon them, not altogether, but so as to seek for nothing more than practicable excellence.

2. Possession is always short of hope, and things never pass out of imagination into reality, without losing considerably.

3. Our pursuits, when considered in the gross, and from that remote point of view, from whence only their leading features could be discovered, each alike promises a series of unalloyed enjoyments. But how different the scene when we approach within sight of the minute details! Numberless little troubles, nameless inconveniences, and hourly cares, unthought of before, often start up when in possession, inch by inch, to devour, like a gnawing worm, that felicity which, viewed from a distance, seemed so entire!

“ ——— All, when life is new,
Commence with feelings warm and prospects high,
But time strips our illusions of their hue.”

APPROBATION.

The approbation of our families, who are with us in our secret hours, hear our private converse, know the habits of our lives and the bent of our dispositions, is, or should be, to us far more pleasing and triumphant than the shouts of the multitude, or the worship of the world.

ARROGANCE.

1. Few things are more disgusting than that *arrogant* affability of the self great, which only serves to show others the sense they entertain of their inferiority, since they consider it necessary to stoop so low to meet it.

2. What is more humiliating than to be addressed in terms of such condescending mockery of friendship, as the self-consequential apply to those they think their inferiors, when they wish for any immediate purpose to conciliate or coax them—a tone which generally contains, in its very familiarity, as much insult and offence, as the most direct assumption of distance and superiority.

ASSISTANCE.

1. Vast failings are overlooked, in those whose aid we want.

2. The precise qualities which procure a man offers of assistance, are those, nine times out of ten, he would sacrifice by accepting it.

3. Assistance from *friendship* is always bought dearly, and turns out generally to be good for nothing when you have it.

4. Pity and relief are oftener met with under the thatch of the cottage, than in the mansion of the rich.

ASSOCIATES.

It is in the nature of the human heart, to feel a closer connexion with those who are nearer to ourselves in rank of life. We do not feel a desire to associate with those, to whose habits of life we cannot be reconciled, because we are unaccustomed to them : we may fly with open arms to an equal, but not to a superior.

ASSOCIATED IDEAS.

How often do we find ourselves in society, which we are sure we have never before met, and yet feel impressed with an embarrassing and ill-defined consciousness that neither the scene, the speakers, nor the subject are entirely new.

ASTONISHMENT.

We ought only to be astonished at our being still able to be astonished at any thing.

ASTRONOMY.

Astronomy, by the grandeur of its views and the perfection of its theory, is the most splendid monument of human genius—the most

sublime production of man's intelligence. Misled by the illusion of their senses, and by their personal vanity, mankind, during ages of ignorance, regarded the earth as occupying the centre of a finite sphere, with sun, moon, and stars as its appurtenances; they feigned to themselves its creator and comprehender; and they were fully punished for their foolish pride, by the superstitious fears with which these false notions inspired them. After long studies, the veil, which hindered them from perceiving the true system of the world, was removed from before their eyes. They then found themselves to be nothing greater than insignificant objects, existing on the surface of a globe that was scarcely perceptible in the planetary system of which it formed a speck, which system itself was but an imperceptible point in the universe. The enlarged ideas, to which this discovery has led, are calculated to console man for the rank he holds on the earth, by acquainting him with his real condition, and the extreme narrowness of the base on which he has been accustomed to measure the universe. We should watchfully preserve and carefully improve our stock of knowledge pertaining to this highest of sciences, which constitutes the most gratifying subject of contemplation; has rendered most important aids to the sciences of navigation and geography; but the greatest benefit of which, has been the dissipating those terrors occasioned by celestial phenomena, and the destruction of those errors which arose from ignorance of our true relations in Nature—errors and fears which would speedily be revived, if the lights of science were extinguished.

ATTEMPTS.

Nothing will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must first be overcome.

ATTENTION TO AFFAIRS.

1. It behoves every man to become acquainted with his own affairs, as soon as he has any that are worth attending to.
2. A person is always easy, whose affairs are always in a regular arrangement.

ATTENTION.

1. The defects of our actions proceed from want of attention; if men were more attentive, they would make fewer errors.
2. Fixing the attention in youth, is laying the surest foundation of that superstructure on which the intellectual and moral happiness of the individual depend. It is the first step towards the development and perfection of the reflecting faculties.

ATRABILE.

The sense of depression and melancholy—effect of atrabile—is best remedied by a simple diet and a moderate indulgence of the appetites; and, in case of nervous debility, exercise and fresh air will soon restore comfort to the feelings.

ATTRACTION.

1. Attraction, or the property of gravitation, was known before Newton's time; he only found it to act in the direct ratio of the mass, and inversely as the square of the distance.

2. Gravitation is but the mutual affection existing between bodies similarly constituted.

3. The word attraction ought never to be used but to express the fact, the existence of which is acknowledged.

AUSTERITY.

1. They, whose very presence wounds our amour propre, by imposing restraint upon us, may be esteemed, respected, and even admired; but we can never regard them as amiable.

2. That conduct with which the world can directly find no fault, may still be allied with bad principles; that is to say, it may savour of rigour and obduracy. Natural manners and superior talents, give umbrage to those persons whom the world too readily honour for their strictness.

3. There have been men who have gone so far as to make a conscience of their perverse and obstinate pride; others have extracted from their fanaticism, motives for justifying the worst resolves of their own bosoms: habitual crime supplies certain characters with a kind of indurated temper which exempts them from the sense of compunction, at least while misfortunes do not overtake them.

4. Religious characters—those tempered high with fanaticism—are capable of acting with much villany.

5. There is a superstitious, cold-blooded, heartless cruelty, which is the extreme point that crime can reach.

6. The lofty man, who assumes airs of importance and dignity, and mistakes pride for high-mindedness—who is even just in punishing, but knows not how to pardon—checks and alienates those hearts, the drawing forth of which by liberality produces those men who are the admiration of the world.

7. Excessive severity is only calculated to alienate the affections of young people, to spoil their temper, to make them intractable, and to plunge them into a course of errors which mild counsels and kind treatment would usually prevent.

8. Virtue, divested of humanity, is but hateful rigourism.

AUTHORS OF GENIUS.

Authors of genius are the more interesting, when they display themselves in their simple colours, and when their works appear improvised rather than composed.

AVARICE.

1. Avarice is ambition's bastard brother, though ambition be ashamed of the relationship.

2. Is it not strange that the love of gathering gold should survive the care to preserve both property and life.

3. Not even the possession of gold can gratify, for more than an instant, the very heart that is most eager in the pursuit of it.

BAD PASSIONS.

Bad passions awaken each other; the fiend avarice invokes that of pride, and pride is to be supported by cruelty and oppression: avarice and pride soon advance to aristocratic insolence.

BEGGING.

1. He who, at the pressing solicitation of bold and noble confidence, hesitates one moment before he grants, proves himself at once inexorable.

2. I am prejudiced in favour of him who can solicit boldly, without impudence—he has faith in humanity—he has faith in himself. No one who would not be desirous of giving grandly, can ask nobly and with boldness.

3. There is no such heart-scalding insolence as, in refusing a solicitation, to refer the supplicant to others, and with prudential admonitions too. Curse him who would beg, were it not to avoid doing worse.

BENEFITS.

1. Benefits become injuries, when they serve as a pretext for presuming to treat insultingly him who has received them in the confidence of friendship.

2. It is less dangerous to commit injuries against some men, than to do them too many favours.

BENEVOLENCE.

1. If dissimulation is ever to be pardoned, it is that men have recourse to in order to obtain situations which may enlarge their sphere of general usefulness, and afford the power of benefitting themselves and others to those who must have been contented only with the will.

2. The feeling of benevolence is a greater pleasure than the possession either of money or power.

BIGOTS.

Nothing can be so narrow as the scale of what is admirable fixed in the mind of a bigot: all moral excellence, all brilliant accomplishments are naught; nothing is of any consideration but the formalities and observances, which they are accustomed to regard as of the highest importance. Bigots acknowledge no excellence except their own particular habits, and are blind to the most shining virtues in any one who dissents from their own creeds. Talents nor virtues do the possessor of them any credit with such people; they scowl upon

and disparage all that does not square with the level of their own stupid conceit.

BIRTH.

Sure it is a boast as honourable, to have those capacities which are necessary for the foundation of a family, as to be descended from one who possessed them some centuries before.

BOASTERS.

1. The more people boast, the more every body is curious to observe all their steps; and it happens, most times, that they fall very short of their bragging words.

2. Presumption and arrogance are seldom made good, upon the upshot, by deeds and actions.

3. It is the common fate of all things that are much cried up, never to attain to the degree of perfection that was expected; reality could never equal imagination; because it is as difficult to have all perfections, as it is easy to have an idea of them.

BOLD SPIRITS.

There are bold spirits who overstep the limits which use and education fix to the opinions of men in every state of society.

BUSTLERS.

There is a kind of men who may be classed under the name of "*bustlers*," whose business keeps them in perpetual motion, yet whose motion always eludes their business; who are always to do what they never do; who cannot stand still, because they are wanted in another place; and who are wanted in many places, because they can stay in none.

CALMNESS.

1. Some characters of the utmost activity, are much calmer than the most inactive: we should distinguish always between indolence and calmness; calmness is the beginning and end of useful activity; indolence the beginning, middle, and end of uniform apathy for all activity.

2. Those who govern well are generally calm: they are prompt and resolute, but steady and mild.

CANT OF FEELING.

Nothing is so disgusting as the whine of tenderness; the mere cant of feeling; the parade of sympathy: they bring the most amiable part of our nature into disrepute, and prevent many a man from being generous, lest he should be thought ridiculous.

CARDS.

To dribble away life in exchanging bits of painted pasteboard, round a green table, can only be excused in folly or superannuation.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

It is curious to observe the many cases in which similar effects are produced by similar causes ; or rather the various feelings and actions, which, though not even remotely assimilating, equally conduce to the same end.

CHANGE OF OPINIONS.

We observe that when a new idea is presented to our minds, it is not enough that it should be, in itself, just and true, for it to be readily adopted by us ; it is also essential that it should as well harmonize, in its relations, with the sentiments we already entertain. This explains the opposition, and even irritation, which truth has to encounter at certain times, and among certain men : it also accounts for the pain which judicious and well-informed minds experience when false or crude ideas are presented to them. Our intellect being the most complex product in Nature, the most liable to all sorts of influence, the most susceptible of alterations and changes of all kinds—it must necessarily be constantly varying in its general disposition. Yet, as every thing is connected in the universal economy, and changes only occur by gradation and transition—in like manner, it happens that any change in the modification of our mind is brought about. This is the reason why much time is requisite for one of strong and decided intellectual powers to pass from one system of ideas to another to which it is opposed.

CHILDREN.

Towards our children we should be full of tenderness, complaisance, and indulgence ; in our presence they should never lose aught of their liberty and candour. On this condition alone can we be certain of always possessing their affection and their confidence. We should indulge them in all that is proper and just, and that does not infringe on the rights of another ; but we should be able to refuse granting them whatever might be injurious to them, or occasion undue expense to ourselves, or that would interfere with the dues and comforts of others. Principally, we should be calm and firm in respect of their caprices. If we wish that they ever should become patient and reasonable, it will be indispensable that we should accustom them early to regard reason and justice as two imperative obligations for their conduct in life ; and our restraints upon them should always bear the character of considerateness and necessity. They should never perceive that we were actuated by austerity, love of rule, or self will ; for, if they see reason to put this construction upon our treatment of them, we shall lose our claims upon their respect and regard ; still more certainly shall we lose in their estimation, if we are incessant in our admonitions, reproofs, and reproaches : to such they would soon cease to be sensible ; whereas, if they find us habitually patient and indulgent, a single word, rarely but justly applied, and still succeeded by indulgence, will make a deep and lasting impres-

sion upon them. Lastly, in all that relates to our children, as well as in all other respects, they should never receive from us any examples but those which are beneficial; for it is our example, more than any thing besides, which constitutes their education.

CHOICE OF FRIENDS, &c.

How much it would conduce to our happiness if we were select in the choice of our friends and books; to choose them both for their good sense and knowledge; to be contented with a small but certain income; to have no master, and but little need of servants; to be without ambition, envy, or avarice; and to preserve our health by exercise instead of medicine.

CHOLER.

1. A habit of being passionate is one of the most dangerous impediments to the enjoyment of the two closest ties existing among men—marriage and friendship. It is impossible but that these ties should be broken, or at least very much relaxed, when either party is a slave to fits of anger.

2. Of all kinds of petulance, none is more contemptible than that which breaks out against unreasoning or inanimate objects.

COMMITTING OURSELVES.

He who says aught that may be repeated to his own prejudice, does but load a piece for any of the company to shoot him dead with, at their pleasure and convenience.

COMMON SENSE.

Common sense, deliberately exercised in forming a sound judgment, united with perfect integrity, is of infinitely greater value than genius without stability.

COMPANIONS.

1. Almost every thing in existence derives its qualities from that with which it is connected. The frame and temperament of men differ with the climate, and the mind partakes of the dispositions of the company we keep. It is not possible that he can be well disposed who associates with bad company.

2. No company is far preferable to bad, because we are more apt to catch the vices of others than their virtues; as disease is far more contagious than health.

3. Humour and gaiety should be used in social intercourse. We should be disposed to engage ourselves in the acquirement of intelligence by reading, reflection, or observation, when not amused by friends, rather than dispose of our time in that worse than useless fooling and impertinence so generally in practice.

COMPLAINTS.

Nothing is so useless, so utterly feeble and contemptible, as the groaning forth one's helpless lamentations into the ears of our friends.

COMPLIMENTS.

1. Their use is a kind of commerce of officious lies, whereby few people are deceived; for few people take them for any thing else than what they are. What vanity and loss of time in visits of etiquette, salutations, ceremonies, confabulations, offers, promises, and praises; how many exaggerations; what hypocrisy and imposition, known to every body—to those even who receive and hear them! So that it looks as if men were agreed to mock at and deceive one another. He who knows that another man tells him an impudent falsehood, must say, "I thank ye;" and the latter, who knows that the other does not believe him, must keep a good countenance; they watch each other, to know who shall begin and who shall end, though both of them would be glad to be gone.

2. I am apt to mistrust a great complimenter, because I fancy that when a man is capable of so much dissembling, he is but too much disposed to deceive others.

COMPULSION.

Men, who can think and act for themselves, will not easily brook compulsion.

CONCESSIONS.

Those persons who have lost the habit of conceding, can, at times only take one course—that of seeming to approve.

CONFIDENCE.

1. We should try those in whom we wish to place confidence, with the minutest regard to their real worth, and not their specious qualities; found every affection on the principle of the mind, and never give way to injurious opinions against any man, without the fullest conviction that they are just.

2. We can depend on no man, on no friend, but him who can depend on himself.

CONJECTURE.

On the arena of conjecture, all men stand equal who are equally well informed.

CONSOLERS.

Consolers are always, for the time at least, superior to those whom they console.

CONTEMPT.

An Indian proverb says that the dart of contempt will even pierce through the shell of the tortoise; but this is more particularly the case when conscience tells the subject of the sarcasm that it is justly merited.

CONTENTMENT.

I have been taught what to value, and what reject; I have seen the worthlessness of wealth, and find the real value of virtue. I was

proud, was ambitious, and my pride was not untainted by envy; but I have been taught by events, that riches cannot ensure happiness, and that, if there is little on earth to create pride, there is still less to excite envy. So far from content resulting from extensive property—the property itself is a constant source of discontent.

CONVERSATION.

1. Experience and knowledge of the world will soon teach every sensible and acute person the important lesson, that information and increase of knowledge are to be derived from the conversation of every individual whatsoever with whom he is thrown into an occasional train of communication.

2. Conversation with men requires some exertion, exacts some labour; there must always be something more or less approaching to contention in discussions with those who are constituted like ourselves. If our opinions are different, there will be dispute in maintaining—if similar, rivalry in expressing them; and, in consequence, there will be more or less of effort. In conversing with women, there is nothing of this; Nature has established a mutual spirit of concession between the sexes which prevents it.

3. Those who attempt to give satisfaction in conversation must consider that they are to speak for others, and not for themselves.

4. To listen attentively to what is said, and to reply pertinently, is among the greatest conversational perfections.

5. One of the reasons why there are so few reasonable men to be found in conversation is, that most men think rather of their own opinions, and what they have to say, than of answering precisely what has been said to them.

6. A sort of men not to be endured are those who, not vouchsafing to show any attention to what is said, think, or seem to think, by themselves, of anything else besides what is the subject of the conversation. When a man is absent in company, he gives just ground for believing that he does not care much for those who are with him, and the company are generally pleased to be rid of such thoughtful men.

7. In company every guest should take his part in the conversation, instead of one mighty Tom of a fellow, like Dr. Johnson, silencing all besides by the tremendous depth of his diapason.

8. No man ought to make it his business to take up anybody in conversation for every wrong thing which he may let fall. Conversation is a free commerce wherein a great many little things must be passed by without inquiring into them: as they are often spoken without design, so they ought to be heard without any critical reflections.

9. Confidence supplies more to conversation than wit.

COPERNICUS.

Copernicus, in dread of offending against the established superstition, was under the necessity of presenting his statement of the true

astronomical system under the form of an hypothesis; and he only dared “*suppose* whether the movement of the earth would not render the theory of the celestial appearances more exact and simple.”

CORRESPONDENCE.

He whose letters are the real transcript of friendly conversation, without effusions of sentiment or wit, seems to have a heart formed for friendship.

CORRUPT MEN.

None are so ready to charge corruption upon others as those who are corruptible themselves.

COUNSELS.

It frequently happens that the counsel which we reckon intrusive, when offered to us unasked, becomes precious in our eyes when the pressure of difficulties renders us more diffident of our own judgment than we are apt to find ourselves in the hours of ease and indifference and thus is more especially the case if we suppose that our adviser may also possess ability and inclination to back his counsel with effectual assistance.

COUNTRY FOLKS.

The prejudices of those who live in the country often become both deep and envenomed, because, having little to do or think of, they are but too apt to spend their time in nursing and cherishing petty causes of wrath against their next neighbours.

COURAGE.

There is a certain dignity of character which the brave man will never lose, whether he resists the terrors of the tented field, or the temptations of luxurious life; whether he contends against the armed foe, or against himself, the most dangerous of all enemies.

COWARDICE.

1. Most men are naturally brave; all men are, in some cases, cowardly.

2. If we take a wide survey of mortal humours, we shall conclude that no man is absolutely brave or cowardly; that the weakness of Nature is never so far expelled but it will reign in some part; nor the self-assistive power of the Will ever so debilitated but it will make itself known in some instances.

CRAFTY MEN.

Cunning and artificial men do not commonly mistrust those in whom they perceive simplicity, and therefore they do not think themselves obliged to stand upon their guard; but when a plain man knows how to be silent, his attentive silence may afford him the means of surprising the most crafty men: a silent simplicity is sometimes as good as a speaking craftiness.

CRIMES.

1. Many pause on the brink of a crime who have contemplated it at a distance without scruple.

2. The wicked may work mischief to others, but they never can inflict a pang such as they endure themselves. Of all the miseries that tear the heart of man, none may compare with those it feels beneath the sway of baleful passions.

CRITICISM.

1. If there is any author whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition.

2. Every book which accords not with natural premises—with the eternal simplicity of Nature, and which is written to establish supernatural or pious hallucinations, should be regarded as containing stupifying nonsense—the poison of priestcraft or fanatical folly; and we should know that it is worse than loss of time to read such illusory rhapsodies.

DANGERS.

1. Even the bravest feel a thick beating of the heart, and a mixture of natural apprehension, intense curiosity, and anxiety for the dubious event, when they approach alone to a scene of interest and of danger.

2. There is often connected with those high wrought minds, which are the last to fear what is merely dangerous, a momentary hesitation arising from a dislike to look upon what is horrible.

3. There are few dangers that do not become familiar to the firm mind, if they are presented to consideration as certainties, and in all their open and declared characters; while, on the other hand, the bravest have shrunk from the dark and the doubtful.

4. The bravest man, placed in a situation where he is surrounded by suspicious persons, and removed from all counsel and assistance, except those afforded by a valiant heart and a strong arm, experiences a sinking of the heart, a consciousness of abandonment, which, for a moment, chills his blood, and depresses his natural gallantry of disposition.

5. Nothing makes men's wit so alert as personal danger.

6. It is seldom danger is so pressing that there is not time for reason to do its work.

7. Next to having stout and friendly comrades, a man is chiefly emboldened by finding himself well armed, in case of need.

8. The instinct of self-preservation seldom fails, even in the most desperate circumstances, to recal the human mind to some degree of equipoise, unless when altogether distracted by terror. Fear, when it does not conduce to ensure the means of safety, is painful without use.

DECIMAL ARITHMETIC.

The identity of decimal calculations, or calculations of decimal parts, with that of integers, leaves no doubt as to the advantages of using decimal parts in every kind of admeasurement. It is only necessary to contrast the trouble of compound multiplications and divisions with the facility of completing the same in decimals—a facility which may be increased by means of logarithms, the use of which may become general by the aid of simple and cheap instruments.

DEISM.

Deism is a sort of personification of blind powers, by the aid of the fancy, which has been adopted from the fear of persecution, or out of respect to the prejudices of other idolaters.

DELICACY.

Delicacy is a disposition arising from the best qualities of the head and heart; but it lessens the number of our pleasures, and makes our sensation of them less sprightly.

DELIRIUM.

Nothing can be more melancholy than to hear the mind at work concerning its ordinary occupations, when the body is stretched, in pain and danger, upon the couch of severe sickness; the contrast between the ordinary state of health, its joys or its labours, renders doubly affecting the actual helplessnesses of the patient before whom these visions are rising; and we feel a corresponding degree of compassion for the sufferer whose thoughts are wandering so far from his real condition.

DEPRAVED AGE.

The more depraved are our times, the more particular do we become in our language; we think to make up by our sentiments for what we are deficient in character.

DESIRES.

1. There are few things we should desire very eagerly, were we able duly to appreciate what we desire.
2. Our most favourite desires are often such as are least pleasing to us in the end.

DESPONDENCY.

1. There are moments of despondency, when Shakspeare thought himself no poet, and Raphael no painter; when the greatest wits have doubted the excellence of their happiest efforts.
2. So is it often, under the eclipse of fortune, even with the bravest spirits—forgetting how suddenly before, in the darkest hour, the views of life have changed—they yield to the aspect of the moment, and breathe the mean and peevish complaints of despondency.

DESPOTISM.

Absolute power, whether usurped by the crown or the cassock—whether attempted to be sustained by armed force or secret machinations—is inconsistent with the rights and privileges, and odiously insupportable to the independent spirit of mankind.

DETRACTION.

1. It is happy for mankind that they know so little of the ill said of them behind their backs by one another; and of the evil that is often meditated, in satire and in malice, and still oftener undertaken from motives of interest and envy.

2. Evil speaking is the more mischievous, because it is impossible to make reparation for it.

3. A detracting man is guilty of envy, hatred, injustice, malice, treachery, and cruelty; he delights, above all things, in defaming the best men, and in bringing innocence itself into suspicion; his malignity poisons everything; he pretends to show ill where there is none, and will not acknowledge good where it is to be found.

4. He who, in speaking of another, depicts him in odious colours—who does not see that it is his own portrait which he draws?

5. Let us judge of the sensibility of those whom we wound in their most tender part by our own; and knowing how grievous a thing it is to be spoken ill of, let us learn to forbear speaking evil of others.

DEVIL!

Men have been frightened with the name of the black devil, when the only things they had to fear were the black priests who preached up such a terrible animal.

DIFFERENCE OF FORTUNE.

A man who has cured himself of all ridiculous prepossessions, and is convinced that the difference of fortune makes less difference in happiness than is vulgarly imagined, does not measure out degrees of esteem according to the rent-rolls of his acquaintance.

DIFFIDENCE.

1. Our knowledge of others should prevent our being diffident; of ourselves, our being presumptuous.

2. Too great a distrust of oneself produces a base fear, which, depriving our minds of their liberty and assurance, makes our reasoning weak, our words trembling, and our actions faint.

DIGNITY OF OUR NATURE.

Noble and generous sentiments belong to our intellectual existence, no matter what country we belong to, or what are our opinions, if the heart were not to consult our prejudices.

DISEASES.

Riches produce more diseases than poverty.

DISHONOURABLE SUBMISSIONS.

Methinks a brave man, though desperate of victory, would rather desire to fight and fall, than to resign sword and shield on some mean and dishonourable composition with his insulting antagonist.

DISPUTANTS.

1. Silence may not always be the sign of discretion in a dispute. A man may resort to silence out of a spiteful ignorance, affecting a proud contempt, or a supercilious shunning of contention, rather than admit himself worsted in argument. Vanity will never lose anything; it will indemnify itself as much as possible, by the meanest resorts. A man not knowing what to answer is in a mortifying case; but then he will be silent, to make others believe that he does not vouchsafe to speak, or that there is nothing more convincing that can be added to what he has said already.

2. By the usual mode of disputing, one would think men learned to dispute only to excel in the art of contradicting others; they are not fond of truth, but of contradiction.

DISREPUTABLE HANGERS ON.

When a man is in easy circumstances, and enjoys a degree of consideration, he is beset by those he esteems not, but whom he cannot discard; and these flatter themselves they shall be able, by identifying themselves with a man of reputation, to wipe away the stains with which they are covered.

DISREPUTABLE RICH MEN.

Disreputable rich men, excluded by their vices from the fellowship of their peers, are driven, by mere inability to tolerate their own reflections, into admitting to their houses and familiarity all that equivocal tribe of parasites and hangers on whom instinct draws, like birds of prey, around such characters.

DISRESPECT.

1. It is in trifles that disrespect and unkindness are shown.
2. Too much courtesy is often the reverse of kindness.
3. Neglect is much more offensive to the feelings than absolute hatred.

DEFERENCE.

The greatest and wisest are flattered by the deference of youth.

DOGMATISM.

A peremptory way shows too much authority and presumption, to please others. It is the part of an ignorant or of a young man to decide magisterially and with precipitation.

DREAMS.

1. Dreams lift up fools. Whoso regardeth dreams is like him that catcheth at a shadow, and followeth after the wind.

2. Among the stuff of which dreams are made we can recognise broken and disjointed remnants of forgotten realities which dwell imperfectly on the memory—in fact, the sleeping imagination is actually weaving its web out of the broken realities of actual facts; fancy, in her own time and manner, dresses up the faded materials of early recollections.

3. In sleep, or even in profound abstraction, the mind may arrive at conclusions which are just in themselves, without our being able to perceive the process of thought which produced them.

4. It was because the judgment is sometimes correctly exercised in dreams, with regard to probable events, that, in times of ignorance, the gift of divination was attributed to them.

5. In our dreams ideas occur to us which we had never experienced while awake. We dream, for example, that we converse with a man who tells us things that we had never thought of before. It is not astonishing that credulous minds, during the ages of ignorance, should have attributed these curious phenomena to supernatural causes.

6. The subject on which the mind has been last engaged at night is apt to occupy our thoughts even during slumber, when imagination, uncorrected by the organs of sense, weaves her own fantastic web out of whatever ideas rise at random in the sleeper's brain.

7. Oh! pleasant is it to dream, and to know we dream. All our visions of thought partake at once of reality and imagination. Fiction and truth—clouds, shadows, phantoms, and phantasms—ether, sunshine, substantial forms, and sounds that have a being, blending together in a scene created by us, and partly impressed upon us, and that one motion of the head or the pillow may dis sever, or deepen into more oppressive delight.

DRESS.

It is not every man that can *afford* to wear a shabby coat; and *interested* wisdom dictates to *her* disciples the propriety of dressing somewhat beyond their means, but of living somewhat within them; for every one sees how we dress, but none see how we live, unless we choose to let them. But the truly great are, by universal suffrage, exempted from these trammels, and may live and dress as they please.

DUELS.

1. A man's honour, which is, or should be, dearer to him than his very existence, may often call on and compel him to hazard his own life, or that of others, on what otherwise seem trifling contingences.

2. The bravest men regard the issue of a doubtful conflict with embittered and anxious feelings, the first time when it has been their fate to engage in an affair of honour.

DUNS.

There is something so sharp and *aigre* in the demand of a peremp-

tory dun, that no human tympanum, however inaccessible to other tones, can resist the application.

EDGEWORTH (MISS).

The tales of this lady are recommended for young people, because she habitually and systematically exempts the mind from the impositions of vulgar notions about religious supernaturals ; and because her processes and means of improvement embrace those motives alone which relate to human considerations, and which are purely moral and natural. She altogether discards those vicious illusions of fear and hope, which are derived from depraved and superstitious impressions. Her object is the rational improvement of the understanding, rather than to religionise the imagination.

EDUCATION.

1. The most essential part of education is to form the disposition, habits, and manners of children. Knowledge, unaccompanied by these, is often more injurious than beneficial.

2. The only proper education of youth is the science of language, letters, and figures ; the science of morals, as requisite to constitute a good social being ; and the greatest possible knowledge of the qualities of all useful things, as applicable to the purposes and comforts of life.

3. All that is really worth caring about, in early education, being the regular exercise of the faculties, it is no great matter in the acquisition of what kinds of knowledge they are so exercised.

ELEMENTARY BOOKS.

Nothing is more difficult to compose, and even to read, than a good elementary book ; because, as every thing in it should be analysis and definition, all should be expressed with truth and precision ; if these are wanting, the object has not been obtained ; if they exist, its very force renders it abstract.

ELOQUENCE.

True eloquence consists in saying that which ought to be said, and no more.

EMPLOYERS.

1. Those who engage our services, or whom we employ, should share those feelings of preference which partake of friendship, and that simple benevolence by which Nature has bound us to all beings of our own species.

2. If a man long give his labour to his employer, and is paid for that labour, it might be said that both are equal ; but I say no. For it is in human nature to be prompt to change ; and the employer having always more in his power than his servant, it seems to me a clear case, that, in the course of a number of years, the master is the obligated of the two.

3. With the saintly transcendentalist, (a compound of all that is mercenary in temporal matters, and selfish in its aspirations after another world,) length of services creates no interest.

ENGAGEMENTS.

1. I know of no error, short of absolute crime, which is more productive of mischief in society, than an inattention to engagements, which, being merely voluntary, are too often considered of no moral obligation, or binding from force.

2. He who justly estimates the value of a punctual performance of a promise, will not, without very good reasons, disregard it, whether it be to sign a contract or walk with a friend.

ENJOYMENTS.

Calm and temperate enjoyment is the utmost that is allotted to man. Beyond this, we struggle in vain to raise our state; and, in fact, we depress our joys by endeavouring to heighten them.

ENTERTAINMENTS.

Some motive of selfishness or vanity, is the usual source of *ostentatious* entertainment; friendship and cordial good will to the guests, are satisfied with more simple preparations for their comfort and convenience.

ENVY.

1. The evil which we do, does not draw upon us so much persecution and hatred, as our good qualities.

2. In the common intercourse of life we please more by our faults than by our perfections.

3. Most men being extremely jealous of their own merit, are glad to find some faults in those who might, with some pretence of reason, contend with them for it.

EPICURUS.

The stoics and cynics had, by the austerity of their maxims, dressed wisdom in such an unhappy and repulsive garb, that many were thereby deterred from the study of philosophy. Persuaded that the object of morality should not be to divest man of his humanity, but to enable him to enjoy properly the capabilities of his nature, Epicurus sought to reconcile his precepts with the natural appetites and conditions of mankind; and so, by teaching wisdom under the name of pleasure, he allured many into the knowledge of truth and love of virtue.

EQUILIBRIUM OF NATURE.

1. There is an equilibrium in Nature: if souls of sensibility are often ingenious in tormenting themselves, they are no less prone to seek for, and find, consolation and amends in the most afflicting dispensations.

2. The worst ills of life are chequered with something that renders them endurable to humble and patient minds ; and the best blessings carry with them a necessary alloy of embittering depreciation.

ESTIMATE OF MANKIND.

1. Men are, in general, so ignorant, so selfish, and so vulgar, that there are few who can truly esteem each other.

2. To despise our species, is the price we must too often pay for our knowledge of it.

3. The only way never to be dissatisfied with mankind, is never to want their assistance.

4. We must live intimately with people to know them.

ESTIMATION IN SOCIETY.

1. Not to possess the esteem of our fellow-men, and to be despised by them, is insupportable, and our entire felicity depends on such esteem ; for whatever may be our possessions, and however flourishing our health and means of comfort, we cannot enjoy satisfaction, if we are deprived of estimable consideration in the regards of others.

2. The feeling that he is the object of general dislike and dereliction, seems to be one of the most unendurably painful reflections to which a human being can be subject.

ETERNAL TORMENTS.

Extract from Edwards's Discourse :—" Be entreated to consider attentively how great and awful a thing *eternity* is. Do but consider what it is to suffer extreme pain for ever and ever ; to suffer it day and night, from one day to another, from one year to another, from one age to another, from one thousand ages to another, and so on, adding thousands to millions, in pain, in wailing and tormenting, groaning and shrieking, and gnashing your teeth ; with your souls full of dreadful grief and amazement ; with your bodies, and every member of them, full of racking torture ; without any possibility of getting ease ; without any possibility of moving God to pity by your cries ; without any possibility of hiding yourselves from him ; without any possibility of diverting your thoughts from your pain ; without any possibility of obtaining any manner of mitigation, or help, or change for the better. How dismal will it be, when you are under these racking torments, to know assuredly that you never, never shall be delivered from them ; to have no hope ; when you will rejoice if you might but have any relief, after you shall have endured these torments millions of ages, but shall have no hope of it ; when, after you shall have worn out the age of the sun, moon, and stars, in your dolorous groans and lamentations, without rest day or night, or one minute's ease, yet you shall have no hope of being delivered ; when, after you shall have worn out a thousand more such ages, yet you shall have no hope, but shall know that you are not one whit nearer to the end of your torments ; that still there are the same groans, the

same shrieks, the same doleful cries incessantly to be made by you, and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend for ever and ever; and that your souls, which shall have been agitated by the wrath of God all this while, yet will still exist to bear endless wrath; your bodies, which shall have been burning all this while in these glowing flames, yet shall not have been consumed, but will remain through an eternity yet, which shall not have been at all shortened by what shall have been past." "Besides, the capacity of the wicked will probably be enlarged in a future state; their understandings will be quicker and stronger; and God can give them as great a sense, and as strong an impression of eternity as he pleases, to increase their grief and torment." Explain to any unprejudiced understanding the doctrine of eternal punishment in a hell of torture; let the idea only stand forward in its native deformity, wrapped in no deceitful veil, and seen through no deceiving medium—and human ingenuity is impotent to gain belief in it. The extravagancies of the orthodox creed must be seen in dim and undefined outline, obscured by some mysterious veil, or hidden behind some early prejudice, or shrouded in the dazzling and treacherous exhalations that rise from an excited imagination—or they could not be received into any mind possessing the most common powers of perception and judgment. The orthodox god, the hidden, mysterious, Christian monster, shall rack and torture countless myriads of us sentient beings, without any object except to prolong eternally our capacity to know and to suffer infinite and excruciating misery! What a tremendous, what a savage thought! what a thing is system! To think that a man, possessing a heart of flesh, and an enlightened understanding, can steadily contemplate such a scene as this, and imagine it is a just exhibition of the conduct of a fancied author of the natural world! Such a god is worthy of those hearts that first leaped in exultation at the device of consuming the body in the flaming faggot for the good of the soul. 'Tis a horrible thing that the human mind should be reduced to such a state of prejudice and weakness as to believe in, and worship, such a monster. O, citizens! can ye lend yourselves to the support of the horrid doctrines of divinity? Can ye submit to the assuming presumption of a set of Christian priests—knaves and rogues, whose aim is to cheat and oppress you? Can you longer permit your courts of law to be made holy tribunals for enforcing the authority of priesthood, by insisting on the Christian test oath, and by sentencing men to fines for acts of usefulness on Sundays?

ETERNITY.

What time do I exist in eternity? What space do I occupy in the midst of the infinite universe of globes? How few are they who know me or think of me? He who makes such reflections may well be an humble man.

ETYMOLOGY.

1. Etymology is a science of infinities, in which nothing can be

determined. We can no more get at the roots of words than of men.

2. A primitive word, if such could be, might undergo such transformations in its transmission down from one generation through numerous succeeding generations, that it may entirely lose all relation to its original signification.

EULOGY.

1. Vague, blind, or reckless eulogy, confounds the good, bad, and indifferent; it depresses real, conscious merit, while it encourages false pretensions; it deceives the judgment of the unlearned and the indolent; and, where it does not corrupt the taste, it prevents all improvement.

2. The most inordinate self complacency and self eulogy, are indulged by nations and tribes the lowest on the scale of civilization.

EVENTFUL PERIODS OF LIFE.

There are epochas, in most men's lives, of peculiar action and peculiar repose; important events come in crowds at one time, and at others, we forget that existence is any thing but a monotonous return of day and night. Whoever has cast an observative retrospection over his past life, will be struck with this remark, and perhaps he will be astonished to find that the whole history of his life is confined to recollections accumulated over a small number of days, and often a single one.

EXCELLENCE.

1. Nothing is a greater obstacle to the production of *excellence*, than the power of producing what is *pretty good* with ease and rapidity.

2. He who, in his mind, has never formed the idea of something superior to what he is used to, will never arrive at any degree of excellence.

EXCITED IMAGINATIONS.

A thousand vague fears, wild expectations, and indigested schemes, hurry through one's thoughts in seasons of doubt and of danger. But, by arresting them as they flit across the mind, by throwing them on paper, and, even by that mechanical act, compelling ourselves to consider them with scrupulous and minute attention, we may perhaps escape becoming the dupes of our own excited imaginations.

EXECRABLE OLD MEN.

1. The sight of some depraved old men is so revolting, that we can hardly feel sympathy for them under any circumstances.

2. What can be more disgusting than the sight of a man much more than fifty—the worst complexion of that period of life, when the aspect seems to be creeping upon him which belongs to, and

betrays the gray decrepitude of lust or greediness—those manners that indicate the impure and nauseous habits of devotion to coarse vulgarity, and gross sensualities; and this, too, combined with religious profession?

EXERCISE.

'Tis good to walk till the blood appears on the cheek, but not the sweat on the brow.

FANATICAL INTRUDERS.

1. The society of some religionists is exceedingly annoying; although they flatter themselves that they are very agreeable companions.

2. It is exceedingly disagreeable to be subjected, in company, to the squeamish nonsense and vulgar superstition of some sectarians.

3. What can be more annoying than the intrusion of a Calvinistic preacher, and suffering from that vulgar and impudent familiarity and canting insolence which such a person only is capable of inflicting?

FASHIONABLE LIFE.

“There youth _____
_____ lavish'd its true bloom, and health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flush'd and-crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure:
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.”

FAT ILL-NATURED MEN.

The look of no man is so inauspicious as of a fat man upon whose features ill nature has marked its habitual stamp. He seems to have reversed the old proverb, “laugh and grow fat,” and to have thriven under the influence of the worst affections of the mind.

FATIGUE.

1. In man the spirit sustains the constitutional weakness; but there is a bound to these supporting qualities, and the *vis animi* of the human struggler becomes broken down by continual exertion.

2. It happens usually to those who endure great hardships, that the exertion necessary to subdue them is, in itself, a kind of elevating triumph.

FAVOURITE NOTIONS.

Some “their own favourite themes and notions start,
And you must hear, offend them, or depart.”

FAVOURS.

Favours expected, are infinitely more operative upon the affections of men than favours received.

FIELD OF SCIENCE.

1. In every science, who, in estimating his own attainments, does not perceive that he has not reached the term? Who does not look beyond his own mind?

2. The art, in which we have no skill, appears to us all accomplished; the knowledge, for which we have no measure, has, to our eye, reached its bounds: our own admiration, or inability, become grounds to us for believing in the perfection of the works of the human intellect.

3. Knowledge, or science, is boundless, and must remain forever incomplete.

FINE SPUN IDEAS.

There is literary affectation in attempting to analyse our sensation in their extreme; in endeavouring to fix those delicate shades which deny themselves to the utterance; and we labour in vain to make that be comprehended which cannot be expressed. The feelings of our hearts in relation to all that operates upon our senses, is the mystery of mysteries, if we essay their full explanation. Theories too profound to be understood with regard to the *beau*—to grace and dignity—only serve to confound the understanding. To explain the delight we receive in ranging through the arts, and all the sensations of which we are susceptible, it is not necessary to have recourse to the abstract, which savours too much of metaphysics. Nothing can be more ridiculous than an author who runs himself aground in the shallows of bombast, or who would form a tissue of language when the ideas are too fine spun to hold together. Profundities only exist in fiction. We need not fancy depths of thought which cannot be sounded—an abyss that sentiment cannot explain—only to plunge ourselves in gloomy reveries of doubt and distraction.

FLATTERY.

1. The most singular coincidence in Nature, and the most frequently to be remarked, is the highest talents combined with the most inordinate and unquenchable thirst of flattery.

2. The good sense, that is not proof against the grossest flattery, cannot be rated very high.

3. Flatterers are worse than those whom they flatter, and their baseness is the cause of the pride and insolence of other men.

FLIGHT OF TIME.

Time, which, in all cases, flies, alas! too rapidly, is apparently accelerated in speed by every species of enjoyment; but by none so much as by that which is criminal.

FOLLY.

1. Folly is often nothing more than the impetuosity of egotism.

2. There is this advantage in folly: it hinders a man from knowing himself; and really the prospect of one's self is often but a very melancholy one.

FORESIGHT.

Persons of sense foresee a crisis, and temporize with occasion: short-sighted people never comply till occasion becomes necessity—and then it is often too late.

FORGETFULNESS.

1. The most thoughtless of mortals will, at some time or other, have their day of gloom, when they will be compelled to reflect.

2. Impressions of a serious character are seldom lasting on minds long indulged in forgetfulness.

FREE THINKING.

I am no blind Bayard, to take a leap in the dark, under the stroke of a pair of priestly spurs.

FREEDOM FROM SHACKLES.

1. I am never so angry as when I hear my acquaintance wishing they had been bred to some poking profession, or were employed in some office of drudgery; as if it were pleasanter to be at the command of other people than at our own.

2. Some men think to justify the eagerness which they show to raise themselves in the world, when, insulting those who are content with a modest fortune, they tell them that "we are not made so much for ourselves, as for the public."

FRIENDSHIP.

1. They who have resources within themselves, who can dare to live alone, want friends the least, but, at the same time, best know how to prize them.

2. They who are slaves of their bad dispositions—this moment sanguine and endearing, and the next sullen, rude, and indifferent—cannot wonder at the secession of their friends.

3. Few things tend more to alienate friendship than a want of punctuality in our engagements.

4. Those who play their friends slippery tricks, have, in secret, no objection to betraying them.

5. We should be cautious not to require from a friend, more than we should be disposed to grant; it would almost certainly lead to a rupture.

6. An open enemy is better than a hollow friend.

7. The sight of those who are unhappy themselves, seldom produces happiness to their friends.

" ————— 'Tis sometimes sweet to have our quarrels,
Particularly with a tiresome friend."

8. Friendship subsists longer than love, because the intercourse is not so constant.

9. A long life may be passed without finding a friend in whose understanding and virtue we can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and sincerity.

10. He who is open, without levity; generous, without waste; secret, without craft; humble, without meanness; bold, without insolence; cautious, without anxiety; regular, yet not formal; mild, yet not timid; firm, yet not tyrannical—is made to pass the ordeal of honour, friendship, virtue.

11. Neither the anxious, who are commonly fretful and severe; nor the careless, who are always without elasticity—the serenely serious alone are formed for friendship.

12. Friendship has this advantage over relationship—it is always attended with good feeling, which the conduct of relations often prevents.

13. When our friends have proved themselves recreant, we may treat with indifference their renewed declarations; but we still owe them some kindness in their misfortunes.

14. We easily console ourselves for the misfortunes of our friends, when they give us an opportunity to show our kindness for them.

15. Fear and timidity restrain our approach towards him whom fortune has elevated above us. All who are acquainted with the workings of the heart, will allow that equal friendships are the warmest and most lasting. Those who are linked together by their interests, are friends no longer than prosperity lasts.

FUNERALS.

1. Nothing is more equivocal, to the eyes of a severe observer, than those ostentatious consolations—those public marks of sensibility—that are accompanied by so much parade.

2. There are those, who, without the slightest interest or feeling in any object or purpose with which they happen to be engaged, conceive themselves bound to perform all the customary indications of the profoundest sympathy and the deepest sensibility.

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS.

Beware of too sanguine dependance upon future expectations; the most promising hopes are sometimes dashed in pieces by the intervention of some unforeseen and unexpected accident.

GALILEO.

Galileo, by his observation of facts, and by extending his views through the universe, perceived the truth of Nature; and the priests of a religion, falsely asserting pretensions to truth and goodness, persecuted him for promulgating the discoveries of his genius. By the aid of his telescopes, the use of which the priests affected to regard as sinful presumption, he first ascertained the phases of the planets and

discovered the moons of Jupiter. After he had proved, beyond a doubt, the truth of the Copernican system, he was forced into a dungeon for divulging his demonstrations; the congregation of priests declared him a heretic, and at their tribunal, to save his life, he was obliged to retract his opinions—in what disposition of mind may be inferred from his exclaiming, when liberated, stamping emphatically on the ground, “It still moves.” “Are those my judges?” he observed, when retiring from before the malignant and cruel priests who had condemned him. To screen himself from their farther violence, he afterwards appeared to avoid deciding the question himself, and published his arguments under the form of dialogues; but this did not satisfy the priests, however, who were vindictively enraged against him on account of the triumphant manner in which he answered all the objections to the fact of the earth’s motion. Citing him to appear again before them, they forced him to sign a second abjuration, but decreed to him perpetual imprisonment, at seventy years of age, “for, had he stood up and defended certain propositions in the hypothesis of Copernicus which are contrary to the true sense and authority of the holy scriptures.” What a sight! a venerable old man, made illustrious by a long life entirely devoted to the study of Nature, on his knees, renouncing, against the lights of his own conscience, the truth of which he had evident proofs! Honoured be the memory of the executive of the republic of Genoa, who first had the courage to adopt the ideas of this great man, and who caused him to be set free. The doctors and professors of the schools continued, notwithstanding, inimical to his doctrines, because their holy Bible system would be overturned thereby. It was not till after the priests found that it would not answer their purpose longer, to persist, in the face of the whole world, in maintaining the dogma of the stationary earth and moving heavens, that they became ill reconciled to admitting the force of facts obliging them to give up absurdities upheld by the authority of their sacred scriptures. If modern Christians have become more civil, it is because the demonstrations of Newton have thrown in their way an everlasting bar to their calumnies against physical truth.

GAMING.

1. There is contamination in the air around a gambling table, and he whose fortune avoids ruin, shall be blighted in his honour and reputation.

2. The love of play, offspring of avarice and idleness, can become a passion only where there is emptiness both of head and heart.

GENEROUS BUT FATAL ERRORS.

1. History, while she is called upon to censure or commend the actions of mankind, according to the rules of immutable justice, is no less bound to lament the bravely generous, who, preferring the dictates of honourable feeling to those of prudence, are hurried into

courses which may be doubtful in policy, and perhaps in patriotism, but to which they are urged by the disinterested wish of discharging what they account a conscientious duty.

2. Those who, with sincerity and generosity, fight and fall in an evil cause, posterity can only compassionate as victims of a generous but fatal error.

GENIUS.

The discovery of truth by slow progressive meditation, is wisdom. Intuition of truth, not preceded by perceptible meditation, is genius.

GHOSTS.

Folks do not see spectres in the scenes with which they have been familiar from infancy.

GIFTS.

1. A gift that is begrudged is already cancelled.
2. The wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which are often repented of.

GLOOMY MINDS.

Minds of a certain gloomy and determined cast by nature, may be warped by a keen sense of injuries and insults, combining with the love of gain and sense of self-interest.

GOD.

God gains in prodigies what he loses in astronomical science. It is singular that the Lord should know nothing about the movement of the globe which he had set in motion.

GOOD LOOKS.

There is a certain prepossessing something in good looks which is quite undefinable, but which is invariably successful: a handsome face is generally taken as earnest for an honest heart.

GOOD SENSE.

1. Good sense is that portion of judgment which is sufficient for the discovery of simple truths and useful knowledge: it teaches us to reject striking absurdities and palpable contradictions.

2. Nothing shows so much awkwardness of mind as the want of knowledge of the fitness of means for their ends, of persons and things—of time, places, and circumstances; in short, a faculty of moral and prudential calculation.

GRATITUDE.

They who understand the principles of human actions, know that it is foolish in a benefactor to look farther than the pleasure of consciousness and sympathy; and that, if he does, he is a creditor and

not a donor, and must be content to be viewed, as creditors are always viewed by their debtors, with distrust and uneasiness.

GRAVITY AND GAIETY.

1. There is nothing so like melancholy as too great a gravity; as there is nothing so like extravagance as too great a gaiety.

2. When melancholy feelings are brought into collision with those of gaiety, the former seldom fail to triumph. If a funeral train and wedding procession were to meet unexpectedly, the mirth of the last would be speedily merged in the gloom of the others.

GREAT TALENTS.

1. The leading quality of a great man is an understanding which can only err by accident; which sees, at the first glance, the right side of a question, and bottoms all its labours on truth, wisdom, and expediency.

2. Men of great, capacious, and overruling minds, bear aside and subdue, in their climax of passion, the more feeble wills and passions of others.

3. Those men only are truly great, who leave behind them some durable memorial of their talents and genius.

4. Ah! when the dream of life draws to its close, what will then avail all its agitations, if not one trace of utility remains in view?

HABIT.

Its power over the human mind seems, in many cases, to be in proportion to the difficulty which it has to overcome its repugnancy to what is naturally disagreeable to it.

HAPPINESS.

1. Happiness depends only on the agreement between our dispositions and the circumstances in which we are placed.

2. He who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own disposition, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs, which he purposes to remove.

3. We are seldom absolutely miserable, without being ourselves more or less responsible for it.

4. The world is full of woe, and he is a mere idiot, who, in compliance with the will of the world, labours to acquire those riches which he does not need to augment his happiness.

HEREDITARY DISEASE.

1. The disposition to various disorders is frequently the inheritance of birth. There are few families where there is not one part of the body weakly constituted.

2. Propagation is highly important, not only with respect to organic life, but also to the manifestations of the mind since these depend on

the nervous system. Certain feelings, or intellectual peculiarities, are often inherent in whole families. Now, if the hereditary condition of the brain be the cause, there is an additional motive to be careful in the choice of a partner in marriage.

3. Those whose families are long pursued by fatal disease, become superstitious respecting its fatal effects, and ascribe to place, circumstance, and individual care, much more, perhaps, than these can, in any case, contribute to avert the calamity of constitutional distemper.

HERETICS.

Dr. Franklin wrote, "I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude, or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of the other virtues, as that would give advantage to their many enemies; and they have not, like *orthodox* sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them."

HIGH CHURCHMEN.

Persons of arbitrary principles are always high churchmen: an ally like the church, possessed of great power must be cherished.

HIGH RANK.

High rank is but a fatiguing and barbarous elevation, which imposes on us, as long as we exist, painful sacrifices and the odious law of constant hypocrisy.

HOMAGE DUE TO WORTH.

I have never, in the whole course of my life, offered praise to any man when living, or flung incense on his tomb, from the unqualified consideration of his rank, connexions, or wealth; but to genius, to learning, and to virtue, in what station soever united, I have always paid my most deliberate homage.

HONOUR AMONG THIEVES.

1. In a wild, wandering, and disorderly course of life, men, as they become loosened from the ordinary bands of civil society, hold those of comradeship more closely sacred; so that honour is sometimes found among thieves, and faith and attachment in such as the law has termed vagrants.

2. The worst of men have their good points, and accessible sides, if one would but study them carefully.

HOPE.

1. All our prospective emotions are so brightened to our conceptions by hope's unclouded sunshine, as to give to any of our other thoughts and feelings, with which they may commingle or coexist, an interest and fascination which it would be otherwise difficult to account for.

2. We should never excite a hope which we may disappoint.
3. Hope will catch at the most feeble twig for support in extremity.

HORRID CHRISTIAN TENET.

1. It is inculcated in the Christian churches, that men ought to feel themselves actually guilty of a sin committed six thousand years before they were born : nay, that, prior to all consideration of their own moral conduct, they ought to regard themselves as deserving of everlasting hell fire for the first sin of fabled Adam. No scheme of religion ever propagated among men, contains a more monstrous—a more horrible tenet. The atrocity of this doctrine is beyond comparison. The idea that all the numerous millions of posterity deserve the ineffable and endless torments of hell, for a single act of another, before any of them existed, is repugnant to reason—is subversive of all possible conceptions of justice. No such doctrine can impose itself on any rational mind, which is not fettered by education, dazzled by interest, warped by prejudice, and bewildered by theory. To force such monstrous absurdities on the human understanding, is attended by the worst of consequences, and is a crime of the deepest dye on the part of priests and priestly governments. A man who finds himself condemned for that of which he is not guilty, will feel little regret for his real transgressions.

2. Not satisfied with laying the whole human race under the ban of eternal damnation for an act which was committed before any of them existed, the divine doctors go much farther ; and it seems to be their art to plunge down human nature into as low a degree of degradation as possible. They strenuously insist, that “all men labour under a true and physical incapacity to do any good thing”—that they are unable to act righteously. This inability and thralldom, in its whole extent, they carry back to the original fountain of their guilt and condemnation, and say that it was all done in Adam—that all the human race were made guilty, and were wholly incapacitated to do any good act, in their pretended first father. These tremendous and detestable tenets—this doctrine of man’s inability, is an insult to every man’s unbiassed understanding—to the light of his conscience !

HUMAN LIFE.

1. We must be content to take human life as it is, with all its loveliness, folly, and incongruity.

2. The fashion of the world, its passions, its joys, and its sorrows, pass away like the winged breeze.

3. A few pains and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life.

4. To encounter many things that depress, and many that disgust, is no more than must happen to us all, however we occupy ourselves.

5. If we make use of philosophy as a torch, destined to throw light on the different events of our lives, we shall see that we are never either so fortunate or so unfortunate as we may suppose.

“ ’Tis better, on the whole, to have felt and seen
That which humanity may bear or bear not.”

6. Wretched is he, who, amid constant reflection, can perceive nothing but faults.

IMPERTINENCE.

Receive no satisfaction for premeditated impertinence : forget it, forgive it ; but keep him inexorably at a distance who offered it.

IMPOSTORS.

1. Let a man keep to probability, and he will hardly impose on any. By dealing in the marvellous, he tickles the imagination, and carries away the judgment ; and judgment once gone, what shall save a man from folly ?

2. Those supposed to be possessed of supernatural powers, are venerated in the earlier stages of society. As knowledge increases, they are first held in horror, and are finally regarded as impostors.

IMPRUDENCE.

1. Misfortune is frequently only another name for imprudence.

2. Fools are unfortunate, because they never consider.

3. Irregular desires and unreasonable undertakings must expect to meet with disappointments.

IMPUTATION OF IGNORANCE.

Many instances are seen of profligacy and treachery the most avowed and unreserved ; none of bearing patiently the imputation of ignorance and stupidity.

INCONSTANCY.

Inconstancy weakens the understanding ; a long and exclusive application to a single object hardens and contracts it.

INDECISION.

1. Prodigality itself is not a more certain road to poverty than the indulgence of a timid and irresolute disposition.

2. Oh ! indolence and indecision of mind ! if not in yourselves vices, to how much exquisite misery do you not frequently prepare the way ?

INDEPENDENCE.

1. Independence is my happiness, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or person.

2. Nobody can be considered independent who wants any assistance from others ; and, therefore, of all men, the most dependent is the great man who wants the assistance of hundreds ; who can, in fact, do nothing for himself ; who is always ignorant of what is going on in his own house, and, while he fancies he is directing and commanding everybody and everything, never, by any accident, gets his own way in anything.

3. The wise man is his own best servant and assistant.

4. Misfortune—early deprivation—has given me the privilege of acting for myself.

5. It is more difficult to prevent others governing us, than for ourselves to govern others.

INDUSTRY.

1. Be industrious, and thou shalt prosper: be honest, and thou shalt be happy.

2. When life is thought to be the reward of labour, men are wont to be industrious.

INFERIORITY.

1. Inferiority is of itself a sufficient burden, without our endeavouring to aggravate it by ill nature or neglect.

2. Inferior minds are wont to disparage all that is above the level of their own mediocrity.

INFINITY.

Some one has said, “a man can only be happy when the idea of infinity is become for him an enjoyment rather than an arduous task.” The only exact understanding that can be arrived at respecting it, is, that there can no being exist capable of comprehending it: it is an impossibility.

INGRATITUDE.

There is a sort of ingratitude in being too impatient to acquit ourselves of an obligation.

INJURIES.

1. A man may avoid retaliation of injury from a high state of mind; but it is generally more wise to make an aggressor feel an evil to arise from his evil doing.

2. How lightly may any one do a hundred times more than the degree of evil which it may be within his power to repair to the sufferers and to society!

INJUSTICE.

1. The reproaches of those who have no remedy but the exposition of their wrongs, seldom reach the ears of the powerful by whom these wrongs have been committed.

2. Men are mistaken if they believe that civility and submission will win over to moderation the proud and imperious with whom they contend; such submission only tends to further encroachments.

3. The offender never pardons.

INNOCENCE.

One may be accused, and a prisoner, and yet deserve neither suspicion nor restraint.

INQUISITION.

A committee of medical men was summoned by the holy tribunal to invent a series of tortures that should be calculated with anatomical accuracy to inflict upon the wretched victim the greatest possible variety of agony, and for the longest period of time; so that the relief of death might not prematurely defraud religion of its vengeance on the heretic! So little belief have the priests themselves in the dogma of future punishments, that they are not content to resign those who offend them by unbelief to the course of such punishments; but, finding it necessary for the maintenance of their interests, to enforce the belief in this dogma, they are eager to gratify and glut their vindictive tyranny and malice, by inflicting the most dreadful of human and real tortures on the heretic—the man of sense and humanity—who exposes the villany of such belief in ideal hell tortures. Were men sincere in their religion, and if the interests of priests were not at stake, they would be satisfied with their own performance individually of their rites and worships, and they would not be so presumptuously wicked as to wield a despotic power over others, and compel men to serve their gods—to assent to all their heavenly and lying nonsense as true—and to keep as more holy than the rest of time the day they cause to be consecrated to their selfish uses.

INSTABILITY OR VERSATILITY.

If life be dissipated in alternations of desultory application and nervous indolence; if scheme be added to scheme, and plan to plan—all to be deserted when the labour of execution begins—the greatest talents will soon become enervated, and unequal to tasks of comparative facility.

INSTRUCTION.

1. One of the principal advantages to be derived from instruction, is, not easily to be astonished, and to appreciate men and things at their just value. Ignorance, on the contrary, is seized with admiration and astonishment, and is in extacies, without discrimination—or it as often despises and disparages a thing without reasonable motives.

2. Instruction, conveyed by conversation, unless it is delivered in strong and pithy sentences, loses much of its effect by repetition.

3. If the ignorant would understand, the wise might instruct.

INSULTS.

Every correct principle of self-defence, of peace, of justice, and of humanity, scouts such an abominable precept, as that of quietly submitting to whatever insult or injury is offered.

INTRICATE VIEWS.

It is singular to observe how intricate a subject will appear to one person, at the same time it appears plain and clear to another; and

that other shall see how very near he is to understanding it, and shall see what intercepts his sight, but not be able to make him sensible of it.

INUENDOES.

We should never throw out against a man broken hints and dark inuendoes, which would leave the hearers to suspect anything and everything that ill nature can suggest.

JEERERS.

1. They who jeer others, even wittily, look most wretchedly when they are jeered; and when they happen to be present, in serious and grave conversation, where they are not allowed to exercise their jesting humour, instead of speaking, they do nothing but yawn—or if they speak, they do it so tediously that they make others yawn.

2. I observe this rule, when anybody jeers me: if the jest runs upon trifles, I laugh with the jester; if the jest is injurious to me, and put upon me designedly, I am contented to show that I know and feel it, to stop the course of it. If they go on, I behave myself as I would towards slandering men: I endeavour to be better for it, either by reforming myself, if I deserve to be railed at, or by using myself to be patient, if I do not deserve it.

3. Friends, who often jeer one another, begin to fear and shun one another; then they fall out, and at last become enemies.

JESTERS.

1. They who make others laugh are seldom esteemed.
2. None will less take a jest than a jesting man.
3. No one pities a jester overcome in his vocation.

JOHNSON, (DR.)

1. Many of his Ramblers are little better than a sort of pageant where trite and obvious maxims are made to swagger in lofty and mystic language, and get some credit only because they are not easily understood. I cannot peruse some of his papers without thinking on a second rate masquerade, where the commonest and least esteemed characters in town march in as heroes and sultans, and so forth, and, by dint of tawdry dresses, get some consideration until they are found out.

2. The great fault of Johnson's writings is the pomposity and inflation of his style, which serve to conceal from common readers the most common thoughts, and give an air of dignity to trifles: his conversation was indebted to the same pomposity for its imposing effect; and those whom he could not convince, he could always confound.

JUST REASONERS.

In general, there is a degree of doubt, and caution, and modesty,

which, in all kinds of scrutiny and decision, ought for ever to accompany a just mode of reasoning.

KIND OFFICES.

1. Few things can be done to oblige others, but at the expense of some convenience, gratification, or wish of our own; and he, whose means are limited, should seek to evince his attachment to friends or family, by every little sacrifice in his power.

2. We attend to large concerns for our own sakes; we should attend to lesser ones for others.

3. Our efforts to please others, never fail to reward ourselves.

4. There is nothing more lovely than to love to oblige others; nevertheless, it is the duty of a prudent and discreet man not to be so far overcome by his obliging humour, as to promise anything that is desired of him, without considering whether he can or ought to grant it. Our performances should always exceed rather than fall short of our promises.

KNAVES.

1. Knaves are peculiarly liable to make the most foolish miscalculations, because they judge of others by themselves, and thus lay the foundation of their plans upon a wrong estimate of human nature.

2. Sordid wretches judge of others by their own base minds, and conceive those temptations too powerful for men of worth, which they are themselves conscious they would be unable to resist.

LATENT ENERGIES.

1. There are a thousand latent energies in every man, which only want the powerful voice of necessity to call them out.

2. There are men whose qualities are beyond their seeming; whose spirit and courage lie hidden under an unmarked or plain exterior.

LAWYERS.

It is a circumstance most unfortunate for humanity, that the lawyers, whose interests, well understood, should universally attach them to the cause of liberty, are, in fact, extremely prone to lend themselves to arbitrary power. No situation in civilized life is more dignified than that of the lawyer in a free state, administering justice without bias or partiality; no condition is more abject than that of a slavish and complying bar, distorting the laws to oppress the citizen, and known only by the injuries it inflicts on society.

LEGENDS.

Until mankind shall overcome the repugnance to saying, "I do not know,"—we shall be infested with false, foolish, and misguided theories. The ignorant are ever ready to credit legends connected

with any remarkable physical fact. The position of a large stone, a peculiarly shaped rock, a deep ravine, a fissure, caves—even the black mark across the shoulders of the ass, serve to hang a supernatural story upon, and cannot be suffered to remain unexplained: anything, with weak minds, is preferable to acknowledging they do not know the cause. It is characteristic of mankind ever to substitute errors for facts of which they are ignorant.

LEGISLATURES.

1. In England the executive government has contrived, by means of influence and corruption, to identify itself with the legislative body; hence, parliament, instead of being the *Ægis* of liberty, is a more potent engine of despotism, than could be produced in any other form; because, ancient prejudices, surviving the original constitution, give the fair colour of legitimate power to the foulest encroachments upon the national rights.

2. It is the perfection of the science of misrule, to make those governed operate in the work by perverting their ideas of what is beneficial or injurious.

LEISURE.

In order to be enjoyed, it is absolutely necessary it should be preceded by occupation.

LEVITY.

1. Levity is often less foolish, and gravity less wise, than each of them appear.

2. Levity is often as injurious as malice, in the promulgation of idle or confidential talk or correspondence.

LIBERTY.

It is the same with liberty as with innocence and happiness—he only can be sensible of its advantages who enjoys it himself.

LIGHT SKETCHES.

1. However the exaltedness of some minds, or rather, as I suspect, their insipidity, and want of feeling and observation, may make them insensible to such light sketches as characterize and paint Nature; yet, surely, these are as weighty, and much more useful and interesting, than your grave discourses.

2. Characters and sentiments, if taken from the life, will always be prized by the truly wise, as forming so many pictures of the diversified scene of existence.

LOQUACITY.

1. People seldom speak more than usual without exposing themselves.

2. The loquacity of fools is a lecture to the wise.

LOSS OF FRIENDS

It is impossible not to feel *severely*, on occasions of losing near relations or particular friends, and often for a considerable period of time; but to indulge the extreme of grief, or to give way to despondency, ought not only to be avoided, but is, in fact, reprehensible.

LUCRE.

1. As the wily subtilty of him who is intent on gain, so the abrupt brutality of him who has gained enough.

2. Beware lest the thirst of lucre should creep into a mind which had hitherto admitted nothing but the love of truth and an anxiety to deserve well of all men.

LYING.

1. When we depart from truth, our reason, which we can never stifle, gives us a secret check, which would bring us back to our duty, were it not for the deprivation of our minds. We lie to satisfy our passions, and the habit of lying grows so strong upon us, that after we have deceived others, we deceive ourselves; which is the cause of our false steps, our foolish undertakings, our projects without execution, and our disorderly conduct: we care not to be directed by truth, and yet it is the only correct guide we can have.

2. We may excuse a single weakness in a man of general honour, but a habit of lying is a perpetual degradation.

MASONRY.

“ They are free masons, and have ~~any~~ a sign,
That we, poor devils! never can divine.”

The mason word is a humbug.

MASS OF HUMANITY.

Curiosity and a lurking love of mystery, together with a germ of superstition, are more generally ingredients in the human mind, and more widely diffused through the mass of humanity, than either taste or feeling.

MATHEMATICS.

Whoever is in possession of the higher resources of the mathematical sciences, may be considered as gifted with a species of power applicable to every department of physical knowledge. It is, indeed, for this species of knowledge, what muscular strength is for the different branches of human labour. It not only generalizes the results of experiment and observation, but likewise corrects them, and leads to new and more refined methods of investigation.

MAXIMS.

It is an important species of cultivation, to sow early in the mind

such maxims as serve, in few words, to recall us into the path of reason and propriety, when misled by passion, and which, by fortifying our principles, enable us to support, with courage and resignation, the disagreeable events to which we are exposed during the course of our lives.

MEANNESS.

1. With meanness there is a companion seldom absent, called *low cunning*, which makes the individual totally blind to his own character, or to the observations of others upon it. He fancies that he is outwitting them, and depriving them of something to his satisfaction, while, in fact, he is but undermining his own sources of respectability and happiness.

2. May you never know what it is to hold buried at the root of a heart, naturally both honest and proud, the biting, gnawing recollection of *one* act of meanness. Indulge a thousand evil passions, and you may wash out their traces with tears—but yield once to a base one, and you will find it not only difficult to weep, but vain.

“Nor tears, that wash out guilt, can
Wash out shame.”

MEDICINE.

1. It is much easier to prevent bodily pain, by the constant controul of our appetites and passions, than to relieve the consequences of irregularity by all the efforts of medicine and surgery.

2. A patient is seldom pleased with that sort of consolation which is founded on holding light the malady of which he complains.

MEN OF SENSE.

We seldom call those men of sense, who are not of our opinion.

MEN OF WIT.

To say they are waspish, is the common place objection of fools to men of wit.

MERIT.

There would be little merit in being virtuous, if there were no obstacles to surmount in order to be so.

METEORIC STONES.

Meteoric stones are the mineral principles that had been disseminated through gaseous volumes as co-constituents, and are precipitated into mass by the action of affinity in other constituents of those bodies. The new formation rejected them in its composition, and thus thrown into union of themselves, the residuum produces the mineral substance. These stones are, in fact, the *caput mortuum* of an extensive chemical combination; and when combustion takes place in the union of these meteoric gases, the precipitates will be

found to have been subjected to its action, and sometimes even are vitrified.

MIDDLING CONDITION.

The extremes of luxury on the one hand, and of misery on the other, have a decided tendency to harden the human mind; but the middle condition, inasmuch as it is equally removed from both these extremes, seems to be that particular meridian, under which all the kindlier affections and the finer sensibilities of our nature most readily flourish and abound.

MILITARY.

A recollection of the ridiculousness of the military character may be proper. Its first constituent is obedience: a soldier is, of all descriptions of men, the most completely a machine; yet his profession inevitably teaches him something of dogmatism, swaggering, and self-consequence; he is like the puppet of a showman, which at the very time it is made to strut and swell, and display the most farcical airs, cannot assume the most insignificant gesture, advance either to the right or to the left, but as he is moved by the exhibitor. The creature of force—its instrument and its victim—the soldier takes every station his trade assigns him.

MIND AND BODY.

There is a reason that sets us above all things by thoughts, and there must be another that brings us back to all again by our necessities.

MIRTH.

Are you a stranger to the perfections of mirth? I tell you all wisdom is concealed in it. There is ridicule to be drawn out of every thing; but every thing does not produce the serious. The ridiculous reigns in all, and the things of the world are not to be treated seriously.

MISCHIEF MAKERS.

There are some who take delight in bearing from one to another, to provoke resentment, the careless observations, but marvellously coloured, which too often fall from us in an idle moment: men become the pimps of petty scandal, and, violating the sanctity of truth and the confidence of friendship, degrade themselves to coiners and hucksters of exaggerated and spurious conversations.

MISFORTUNES.

1. Under misfortune, we should not, like children who have fallen, and press their hand upon the part that is hurt, lose our time in lamentation—but rather accustom our minds promptly to apply the remedy for the mischief, and erect anew the structure that had been laid prostrate.

2. It is the excellence of a great mind to triumph over all misfortunes and infelicities.

MISTRUST.

1. Hold it cowardice to rest mistrustful, where a noble heart hath pawned an open hand in sign of love.

2. No dependence can be placed in him, who has been guilty of *one* act of positive, cool villany against a virtuous and noble character.

MODEST MERIT.

Where is the man of modest merit and real talent, who has not suffered by being outshone in conversation, and outstripped in the race of life, by men of less reserve, and of qualities more showy, though less substantial? And well constituted must the mind be that can yield up the prize, without envy, to competitors more unworthy than himself.

MORALITY.

The first step towards the attainment of true moral science, is the practical recognition, that "*happiness is the end and aim of our being.*" This self-evident proposition is generally violated. I am told that the conduct I pursue is contrary to the commands of God; and if I reply that my actions are productive to myself and to others of real happiness, I am cut short by the question, "Are the divine laws then to be outraged in pursuit of temporal happiness?"—an intimation that revelation, not happiness, is the test of morality. When we shall see men testing the virtue of every action, simply and *solely* by its tendency to produce happiness to the world, we may augur favourably of the progress of reason. When virtue, and propriety, and decorum, and goodness, shall mean "that conduct which makes men comfortable and happy;" when human beings emulate human excellence, not godliness and divine perfections; when we begin to look into the world and upon our fellow beings, in order to determine right and wrong, instead of adoring the gods and of gazing up to heaven to read revelation there—then may the moral watchman say, "the morning cometh." Immoral godliness has obtained for its professors, respect, riches, and power; but it is only the triumph of enthusiasm, or of cunning hypocrisy, over weak and deluded ignorance.

MORTALITY.

For every single wretch that perished, cut off by Nature's shock or violence—how many thousands, say! have drawn their timeless fates from that worst spring of human woe, the human heart? Think!—think of ambition, envy, avarice, false honour, glory in arms, the lust of beauty, pride, the thirst of power, the zealot's triumph, the priest's faggot, and the soldier's dreams; compared with these, tigers, wolves, earthquakes, inundations, and lightnings, are all innocuous to man.

NAUTICAL SUPERSTITION.

Few mariners are exempt from its influence. The great deep has a tendency to keep open the avenues of that dependent credulity, which more or less besets the mind of every man, however he may have fortified his intellect by thought. With the firmament above him, and wandering on the watery desert, the less gifted seaman is forever tempted to seek the relief of some propitious omen. The confusion between things that are explicable, and things the natural causes of which science does not explain, gradually brings his mind to a state in which any exciting and unnatural sentiment is welcome, for no other reason than that it bears the impression of what is thought a supernatural because it is an incomprehensible appearance.

NEGLECTED OPPORTUNITY.

In our youth we listen not to the voice of reason, which would acquaint us that we are constantly misled by false appearances. Experience comes at last, but too late to be of service. Mature age is the proper time for us to devote ourselves to the serious and useful studies supplied by such experience; but, unhappily, most of us arrive at that age with habits so firmly rooted, that much courage and constancy are necessary for applying to these subjects. Thus the greater number persist in wasting this precious period of life, without reflection and without foresight.

NOBLE RESOLVES.

We find ourselves endowed with extraordinary courage when we take a noble and magnanimous resolution.

OATHS.

He who, for want of equity and uprightness, does not scruple to betray truth, will no less betray it after an oath than if he had not sworn at all. There is something not only ridiculous, but insulting, in forcing an honourable man to stand up before his equals, who know him, or at least can ascertain him to be a man of worth and veracity—there to *uncover his head*, hold up his *right hand*, and utter conditional imprecations on himself, before credence can possibly be attached to a sixpenny disclosure, when, on all ordinary occasions, his simple word would be taken for thousands! and there is something preposterous in the expectation of dragging truth from a notorious liar, through the mere dread of retribution in a life beyond the present. 'Tis priestly trick all.

OBDURACY.

If you have the character of being unfeeling and oppressive, it is more than probable that you have a raw, hard, indelicate side: hardness and pride can soon be perceived by every one.

OCCUPATION.

1. To find ourselves business is the great art of life. Some spirit, some genius is required to teach a man how to employ himself.

2. Hard is the labour of having no employment! Heavy the affliction of being obliged constantly to seek amusements.

OFFICE SEEKERS.

1. These are usually men of that hardened effrontery, which pushes its way to public employment, makes itself conspicuous, and, on all occasions, assumes that importance, which, from the general diffidence of the better part of mankind, is but too easily conceded to most impudent pretensions. In consequence of this unblushing assurance, this arrogant, audacious presumption, this hardened temper, which can bear repulse without being abashed or dispirited, certain individuals oftenest rise to the highest posts; such as would be posts of honour if they were not filled by men who have not one quality which deserves the esteem of their fellow-men.

2. Many charge themselves with official duties of which they are ignorant: they manage every thing badly, brave themselves out with audacity, and sometimes receive congratulations.

3. To solicit a post, and to be competent to fill it, are two very different things.

4. When offices are filled by those who intrigue for them, and not by those who are singled out by their fellow-citizens for their worth and their abilities—it augurs but ill for the republic. Integrity, disinterestedness, and strict administration of justice, can alone insure to the depositaries of power the general esteem.

OMENS.

Melancholy sounds, breathed at melancholy hours, will always be portentous to ignorance; and fear will ever exert its most harassing dominion over the imagination, in seasons of sorrow and affliction.

OPINIONATIVE MEN.

1. An opinionative man is obstinate, because he is determined not to yield; he is naturally stubborn, refractory to truth, and perversely bent against reason; he is so conceited of himself that he never takes into consideration the suggestions of another, nor respects any body's opinion; he never admits himself in error, and therefore no one can be less capable of attaining to any perfection; he fancies he is a man of great merit, and would have others believe it. When such a man disputes against me, I choose to be silent; because I have learned by experience that a man of such character will never acknowledge a truth when he has begun to oppose it; and if I argue with him, I shall only afford him occasion for exercising his obstinacy.

2. They who are wise in their own conceit, must be taught a bitter lesson by experience.

OPPRESSION.

When the voice of an abused people shall rouse their oppressors, then shall effeminacy, rapacity, and faction, be ready to resign the reins they had usurped.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

1. The greatest confidence and freedom, consistent with respect, ought always to subsist between parents and their children; for nothing alienates affection so much as reserve, dictation, and severity.

2. Indulgence, proceeding from well regulated affection, is the only foundation on which the regard of children can be built.

PARTIES.

1. It is seldom that a day of pleasure, upon review, seems altogether so exquisite as the partaker of the festivity may have felt it while passing.

2. It is seldom that the second day of a prolonged festival equals the first; the spirits, as well as the limbs, are jaded, and unequal to the renewed expenditure of animation and exertion.

3. He who gives the entertainment, holds, for the time at least, an influence over the minds of his most distinguished guests; and it is humbling to see that neither art nor wisdom, scarce external rank itself, can assume their wonted superiority over the distributor of good wines and viands.

PARTY ZEAL.

When a man of talent shows himself an able and useful partisan, his party will continue to protect and accredit him, in spite of conduct the most contradictory to their own principles. Some facts are, in such cases, denied—some are glossed over—and party zeal is permitted to cover as many defects as ever doth charity.

PAST AND PRESENT.

1. The past, which is so presumptuously brought forward as a precedent for the present, was itself founded on an alteration of some past that went before it.

2. It is not so well to lament for former times, as to take advantage of the present.

PATIENCE.

Be patient—it is the only remedy against the evils of life; the best, the only alleviation to our sorrows, which life can afford.

PEACE AND SATISFACTION.

1. It is only by sacrificing selfishness, and renouncing inordinate desires, that we can arrive at peace and satisfaction.

2. Noise, confusion, distraction, and fatigue, are called pleasure. To live tranquilly, devoid of malice, and without ambition, seems to be the choice but of few.

3. In foregoing a rule for taste and exaltation, if we do not gain the respect of our neighbours, we shall, at least, not excite their hatred and enmity.

4. In retirement, or engaged in humble pursuits, and earning our subsistence by our industry, we are not tempted to commit that injustice and those meannesses which are recollected with mortification; most men, engaged in much business, do things occasionally of which they are ashamed.

5. Pascal says, "because so few can sit quiet in their own chambers, the world is filled with so much competition and uproar."

PECULIARITIES.

No man lives without foibles or peculiarities; and instead of ungenerously exposing those of others to ridicule and contempt, we should make allowances for them, in order to receive an indulgence for our own.

PECUNIARY EMBARRASSMENTS.

Pecuniary embarrassments lead men to shifts and expedients; these exhausted, to others of less doubtful complexion; blunted sensibility, renewed excesses, loss of cast in society, follow each other in melancholy succession—until solitude and darkness close the scene.

PEDESTRIANS.

Dr. Johnson thought life had few things better than the excitation produced by being whirled rapidly along in a post-chaise; but he who has, in youth, experienced the confident and independent feeling of a stout pedestrian in an interesting country, and during fine weather, will hold the taste of the great lexicographer cheap in comparison.

PEEVISHNESS.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged as to outrun the motions of the will, and discovers itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree disgusting and offensive; because, no rectitude of intention, nor softness of address, can insure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity.

PERSECUTION.

How many *reverend* bishops—fathers in God—have had the barbarity to exult over the agonies or distraction of a noble spirit overthrown by persecution.

PERSEVERANCE.

He only has energy of mind who can give durability to his exertions.

PHILOSOPHY.

Sterling, experimental philosophy represents things in a simple and clear light, and founds all that it advances upon demonstration;

but the fictitious, ideal philosophy of the empirical school of the Christians, always tends to lead the mind into obscurity, speculation, and uncertainty—into a labyrinth where nothing is comprehensible. One is the offspring of reason and Nature; the other of pedantic mystery and sophism, couched in the barbarous jargon of scholastic theologians.

PHYSIOGNOMY.

1. The countenance is a mirror that reflects the predominant passions, and displays an angry, a disdainful, or a suspicious temper, in prominent characters. It is equally true that the more pleasing, exalted, and softer passions of the heart legibly imprint their signatures upon the features.

2. It has been supposed that the physiognomy is but the simple development of traits already impressed by Nature. But, in addition to this development, the lineaments of the countenance are insensibly formed, and it acquires its cast by the frequent and habitual exercise of certain affections of the mind. The expression of certain passions of the mind can be perceived in the face, and, whenever they become habitual, they stamp their aspect durably on the features. It is thus that the physiognomy announces the character, and that the one may be inferred from the other, without having recourse to the attempt of mysterious explications which lead to the supposition of a science which exists not.

PITY.

There is a disdainful kind of pity more hard to be borne than the greatest misfortunes: some people esteem those only who are prosperous.

PLANNING AND PERFORMING.

The task which seems easy at a distance, proves as difficult upon nearer approach, as the fording of a river, which, in the distance, appeared only a brook.

PLANS.

There is a pleasure in keeping our plans; more especially when such plans or resolutions are not worth following out, and when it is improper to do so.

PLEASING OTHERS.

1. To offend nobody, we should have no ideas but those of the world; a man is then without genius and without enemies. If our opinions are contrary to those generally received, we shock the vanity of the greater number.

2. Take here the grand secret—if not of pleasing all, yet of displeasing none: court mediocrity, avoid originality, and sacrifice to fashion and custom.

PLEASURES.

Nature has furnished human kind with pleasures that are plain, easy, and serene ; and the imagination has created them such as are perplexed, uncertain, and hard to come by.

POLITENESS.

Politeness is the happy medium in society which blends the most discordant natures ; it imposes silence on the loquacious, and inclines the most reserved to furnish their share of conversation ; it represses the despicable but common ambition of being the most prominent character in the scene, and increases the general desire of being mutually agreeable : it is, in fact, good nature, regulated by quick discernment, proportioning itself to every situation and every character ; it is a restraint laid by reason and benevolence on every irregularity of temper, of appetite, and of passion.

2. Politeness, in some degree, is inartificial ; it results from simple goodness of heart. It is that conduct towards others, which good will and good sense imperiously dictate. A system of politeness is a system of minor morals.

3. Politeness is often feigned as the varnish of dissimulation. A sincere interest in another's welfare, the simple and affecting outpourings of a lively and warm feeling of good will, are expressed in very different language to the false semblance of politeness, and the deceptive outside show which the custom of the world warrants.

POPE'S BULL.

Extract from a late one : " Errors, [truths,] which, until this time, lurked in corners, and scarcely ventured to bite the foot of the uncorrupted bride of the immaculate lamb, now combine together with daring and unheard of insolence, [virtuous courage and freedom,] and threaten her with total ruin."

POSITIVENESS.

Positiveness is a most absurd foible. If you are in the right, it lessens your triumph ; if in the wrong, it adds shame to your defeat.

PRAISE.

1. Men are so covetous of praise, that they can dispense with truth, justice, and every thing that should season and qualify it.

2. In some cases, exaggerated or inappropriate praise becomes the most severe satire.

3. Those who praise us, in hopes of a liberality, will, perhaps, after they have flattered us, endeavour to prejudice us by a kind of revenge, if we do not reward them as much as they think they deserve for having applauded us, or if they hope to gain more by siding with our enemies.

PREDISPOSITION.

How frequently does it happen, that the same external objects promote, according to the different predispositions of the mind, the most opposite sentiments and resolves.

PREJUDICES.

Prejudices, when once seen as such, are easily yielded; the difficulty is to come at a knowledge of them.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

We do not recover composure by the mere feeling that agitation is mistimed.

PRIDE.

1. There is nothing more absurd, nothing more repulsive, than false pride; and the leading characteristic of a truly noble mind is kindness towards, and consideration for, those who enjoy fewer advantages than ourselves.

2. Pride is often the offspring of a consciousness of demerit; and affability and condescension are avoided, because they throw the party open to an examination which they cannot bear.

3. Pride, which has been said to keep a man from falling, has yet a stronger influence on the mind when it embraces the cause of passion, and seldom fails to render it victorious over conscience and reason.

4. Such as are poor, and will associate with none but the rich, are hated by those they avoid, and despised by those they follow.

“ ————— There are very few things wearier
Than solitary pride's oppressive weight.”

5. Let our pride be corrected by considering that we are mortal; that only a few years ago, we were nothing, and, in a few years hence, shall return to nothing; and that an eternity preceded and will follow us, reducing our space of life to a point; that our landed possessions, however great, are but a speck on a little globe, which is itself but a mote in the universe.

PRINCIPLES.

1. There needs not only an uncommon strength of mind, but much instruction besides, and correct sense, to be able to prescribe for ourselves fixed principles for acting rightly in every possible situation of life; whence would be inferred a sufficiently exact acquaintance with men and things, to estimate them at their real value.

2. The two words, the abuse of which is most common at the present time, are principles and opinions. If it be amusing to observe the confidence with which he erects the edifice of his principles and opinions, who has never analysed a single idea—it is pitiable to see such an example imitated by young people who have scarcely entered on the scene of life.

3. Principles are but rules derived from the judgment we form of what is due to ourselves and to society.

PROCRASTINATION.

1. The procrastinator is not only indolent and weak, but commonly false, too ; most of the weak are false.

“ The flighty purpose ne’er is overtook,
Unless the deed go with it.”

2. Fools look to to-morrow, and wise folk use to-day.

3. The fleeting footsteps of time do not admit of procrastination in the execution of our designs.

PRODIGALITY.

Prodigality is a bottomless pit, into which might be thrown all the treasures of the world, if they could be disposed of : it would be vain to assign its limits : it springs from a disorder in the ideas, on which reason takes no hold, and which may be referred to their false combination in forming the estimate of pleasure.

PROFLIGACY.

1. Profligacy is intensely selfish, and thinks not of the feelings of others.

2. Vicious indulgence is not less discreditable to the head, than dull and disappointing to the heart ; not less culpable as a crime, than contemptible as a proof of stupidity. There is no felicity so pure, no joy so unfailing, as those which spring from the satisfaction of virtue.

3. Meanness is the natural companion of profligacy.

PROFUSION OF PRINCES.

The chief plea resorted to by princes, to justify their extortions, is, that if they take from one, it is that they may give to others ; thus sounding high the merit of their gifts in order to render their rapines less odious.

PROMISES.

1. In what consists the merit of our truth if we observe not our plighted word when we have promised to our hurt ?

2. The promiser escapes not the sin of a word breaker, because he hath been a drunken braggart.

PROTESTATIONS.

1. Large protestations are often used to supply the place of effectual services.

2. The wretched are ever ready to believe in protestations of friendship.

PROVIDENCE.

1. Those who, by favour of natural circumstances, have eschewed the dangers of imminent peril, proclaim loudly their obligations to providence, without being mindful of the reproach they cast upon that same providence in every case where those natural means of preservation have been wanting.

2. There is no providence but the caution and care we are naturally disposed to take in our own behalf, and the advantage we may derive from the concurrence of circumstances favourable to our preservation or success.

PRUDENCE.

Prudence consists in selecting the proper times and seasons for every enterprise, and the best means of insuring success ; in knowing when to speak, and when to be silent : it teaches, in all things, to discover safety and truth from danger and error.

PUBLIC APPLAUSE.

When the public have been surprised into an universal burst of applause, it is their custom to indemnify themselves by a corresponding degree of censure.

PUNCTUALITY.

There is no end of the inconveniences arising from the want of punctuality.

PUNCTUATION.

Punctuation in writing is allowed by all to be indispensable ; without it we read with great difficulty, and are a considerable time in taking the sense of what we read. Yet there are no certain rules for punctuating ; every person points according to his own ideas of correctness, and as he would wish to have his manuscript read, and the sense of it understood.

PURITY OF MIND.

1. A mere narrative of vices is enough to pollute virtue, and youth should know as little as possible about them. A constant picture of the better part of animated nature should be constantly before their eyes ; for, if any kind of ignorance be desirable, it must be the ignorance of vice.

2. The mind, yet tender, yet pure—years shall strengthen it—but oh ! let them not sully it.

PYTHAGORAS.

Pythagoras could only impart in secret to his disciples the knowledge of the correct system of astronomy, not daring to affirm openly that the modifications and movements of the universe happened in the eternal process of Nature, which, being identified with infinity

and perpetuity, admitted not of the idea of first formation. Most of the ancient philosophers had their private opinions, and their public doctrines—distinguished by the terms esoteric and exoteric, or internal and external. The proscription of truth, or making it a contraband article, occasioned this practice.

QUAKERS.

1. It is remarkable that the society of quakers, which professes to be the least formal set of men, is the most formal: the pious snuffle with which they dispense their Christian wares is a habit pertinaciously adhered to, which was in vogue still more anciently than the cut of their coats, and is a most ridiculous affectation.

2. Quakers esteem it the first principle of religion to be deaf to all arguments of reason, resolving all into the inward *dictates and impulses of the spirit*; which spirit is nothing more than their own strongly prejudiced notions, settled by education.

“ From sacred seat above the rest advanced,
Where heav’n’s selected fav’rites sit entranc’d,
See holy ***** first inspired, arise,
With joints all trembling, and with clouded eyes!
Silent he stands—then hums with solemn grace,
To clear his voice and methodize his face;
The slender covering from his hands he draws,
Then pious lifts them up with awful pause;
His eyes still closed, a sacred sigh suppress,
With hollow murmurs, rends his lab’ring breast.
At length, one tortured word escapes to air,
A second, and a third, with equal care,
In slow succession join the formal course,
And interjected sighs complete their force;
By just degrees the tide of passion flows,
And sacred fury in his bosom glows;
The active spirit lifts him from the ground,
And pious frenzy animates each sound;
With heaving sides and lab’ring lungs, he tries
The strength of action and the force of cries;
The heighten’d storm extends with horrid roar,
While briny torrents stream from every pore;
The dread fanatic tempest thunders loud,
And zealous horrors seize the gaping crowd.”

RATIONAL MEN.

Among the men irrational enough, that are born in a hundred years, there may be, perhaps, thirty or forty rational; and these are dispersed through all the earth: judge, then, if they are likely to be found, in any place, sufficiently numerous to bring reason and integrity into fashion.

READING.

To read profitably, it is necessary to be in the habit of selecting extracts and taking notes.

REASON.

Instinct is not always a better director to the inferior animals, than fallible reason to man.

RECEPTION OF FRIENDS.

We should be always ready to receive our friends with an open countenance and a cheerful heart. Society and connexions have claims upon us, to which we should sacrifice every selfish consideration.

REDUNDANT STYLE.

When we are full of our subject, and have examined minutely all its bearings, we are so desirous to set it forth in a striking light; to obtain for ourselves the credit of possessing keen perception or profound thought; to display our erudition, or our acquaintance with the arts, sciences, &c.—that we think we can never say enough.

RELATIONS.

1. Relations take the greatest liberties, and give the least assistance. If a stranger cannot help us with his purse, he will not insult us with his comments; but with relations it mostly happens, that they are the veriest misers with regard to their property, but perfect prodigals in the article of advice.

2. Even the ties of consanguinity are loosened by the collision of interests; so that the nearest relations are seldom the best friends.

3. With regard to our kindred, we do well to discard those who render themselves unworthy of our respect; not to form any expectations of benefits from those who are rich; and to assist, as far as lies in our power, those who are necessitous, without troubling ourselves about their gratitude.

RELAXATION.

1. That rest of the body which succeeds to hard and industrious toil, is not to be compared with the repose which the mind enjoys under similar circumstances.

2. The mind cannot always be attentive—the heart cannot support continual agitation; and both the one and the other require a time for relaxation.

RELIEVING THE DISTRESSED.

The world is too full of misery and deceit to make it safe for any man to be guided solely by his feelings; for he who listens to every tale of woe, without stopping to examine whether it be true or false, and even he who attempts to relieve actual distress whenever it is presented to him, will, himself, in time, become an object of relief.

RELIGION NOT UNIVERSAL.

The mistake into which divines have fallen, or rather their presumptuous assertion, “that no country has yet been discovered where there are not some traces of religious worship,” arises from

their confounding the first stages of civilization with that of complete barbarism; and even in the former, examples are to be found of nations existing without any ideas of religion.

RELIGIONS.

All religions are opposed to facts—are at variance with Nature: they virtually destroy all charity, except for one sect; they render it necessary that the mass of mankind should be kept in ignorance and poverty; they require that children should be taught to think that there is merit in believing that the doctrines of their own religion are true, and that other religions are false—that there is demerit in believing otherwise; and they teach that there is merit and demerit in loving and hating, and liking and disliking, *according to their doctrines*, whether in unison with man's natural feelings, or in opposition to them. Almost all bad passions, vices, and moral evils, emanate from the instruction given in childhood—that there is merit and demerit in belief, and in liking and disliking.

RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CONTESTS.

The zeal and ardour, and the heats and animosities, which religious or political contests seldom fail to excite, must be admitted to be very unfavourable to a calm and dispassionate, and, consequently, a correct judgment, concerning the motives, views, and objects of those who maintain the contrary doctrines; especially when they are successfully maintained.

REMORSE.

Remorse is the sense of abjection felt from the consciousness of having merited the abhorrence of society. What feeling is so dreadful, and attended by such despair, as that we experience on finding ourselves the objects of general horror.

REPOSE.

The undisturbed repose, of which we are so tenacious, when duty or necessity compels us to abandon it, is precisely what we long to exchange for a state of excitation, as soon as we may prolong it at our own pleasure. Only say to a man, "Remain at rest," and you instantly inspire him with the love of labour. Very few are satisfied with the mode of life they lead: if it is easy, they find it monotonous; if active, they complain that it is arduous.

REPRIMANDS.

To reprimand a man at table is a very improper and unseasonable thing: such reprimands have an air of severity, which does not become those who meet for their diversion.

REPUTATION.

Some men are incapable of blasting a reputation but by approving it.

RESISTANCE TO OPPRESSION.

There are few sentiments stronger, or more natural to the human heart, than that of indignation against oppression. So predominant is it, that it is to be found, not with the good and virtuous only, but among the most unprincipled and vicious. If there is any thing addresses itself to all that is generous in the mind, it is this sentiment. What is more, it is the solemn duty of every man to set his face against injustice.

RESOLUTION.

1. As we can change the state of our bodies by regimen, so we may cure ourselves of every mental disease by resolution.

2. Virtuous resolution and manly disinterestedness seldom fail to restore tranquillity, even where they cannot create happiness.

RESPECT.

Venerate four characters : the sanguine, who has checked volatility and the rage for pleasure ; the choleric, who has subdued passion and pride ; the phlegmatic, emerged from indolence ; and the melancholy, who has dismissed avarice, suspicion, and asperity.

RETIREMENT.

1. A taste for retirement, for calm occupation and simple pleasures, ought to be cultivated by every one who is desirous of solid contentment, or who aspires after the dignity of independence.

2. He who passes his days in the peaceful bosom of retirement, may find equal occasions for exerting becoming resolution with him whose lot is cast in the activity of camps, and in the turmoil of war.

3. Retirement is absolutely necessary to the discovery of truths of the first dignity and importance ; for how is it possible to mix much in the world, without imbibing the false and puerile conceptions of the multitude, and without losing that true elevation of mind which, comparatively, despises every mortal concern ? A minute attention to trifles is inconsistent with great genius of every kind.

REVENGE.

Revenge, which is suppressed and deferred, is always most to be dreaded.

REVERSES.

1. It is not hunger and thirst which are feared ; it is the contemptuous look, the cold sneer, with which poverty is regarded ; it is the estrangement of friends, on whom the hopes fondly relied—it is these that bow the spirit and break the heart.

2. How many idle suspicions a sensible mind, disposed to melancholy and depressed by misfortune, is capable of maintaining ; especially if it meets with but a shadow of neglect or contempt from the very person in whose kindness it had taken refuge.

3. To those who have anxious hearts, trifles give cause for alarm.

REVERIE.

1. To achieve any noble enterprise of intellect, it is first necessary to "gird up the loins of the mind;" and that can only be done by him who has the imaginative faculties under the guidance of the will which is incompatible with a fixed habit of "sauntering reverie."

2. The young and solitary student is most liable to indulge in a sauntering humour, which, when favoured by a union with a particular sensibility of temperament, is the source of much of the unhappiness and unprofitableness of maturer life.

3. They in whom the temperament of sensibility predominates have the greatest tendency to reverie.

RICHES.

1. The less we esteem riches, the better we can do without them; and we shall be without the reach of those misfortunes to which they are exposed who are employed in acquiring or afraid of losing them.

2. The world is full of woe, and he is a mere idiot, who, in compliance with the will of the world, labours to acquire those riches which he does not need to augment his happiness.

3. They are to be pitied, who, being in prosperity, will hear nothing but what flatters them; because they never know the beauty of truth and reason.

4. To covet a great estate, is to wish to live in the midst of agitation, fear, suspicion, distrust, and often humiliation; for by how many calculations and transactions, at variance with honesty, must the acquisition of that estate be attended; and when acquired, how much disquiet and disturbance of mind must be occasioned by the fears of losing it; what perplexities and erroneous calculations in the uses made of it! there is nothing, even to the doubt of what may become of it after death, that is not a constant torment to its possessor.

5. There are more poor willing to give charity from their necessity, than rich from their superfluity.

RIDICULE.

1. Dread of ridicule, the weapon of all others most feared by enthusiasts of every description, from its predominance over weak minds, as often smothers what is noble, as it checks that which is absurd.

2. It is seldom that youth, however high-minded, is able, from mere strength of character and principle, to support itself against the shaft of ridicule.

3. There are many things in the world more truly deserving of ridicule, than either awkwardness of manners or simplicity of character.

RIGHT AND WRONG.

Our learned doctors, like our learned priests, must ever be in the right; change their counsels as they may, and we poor laymen are ever in the wrong.

ROMANCE.

We fly from the injustice of the world to the poetical justice of fiction, where our sense of right and wrong is either satisfied, or where our sympathy at least reposes with less disappointment and distraction, than on the characters of life itself. Fiction pleases us not because it is false, but because it seems to be true—because it spreads a wider field, and a more brilliant crowd of objects to our moral perceptions, than reality affords. We can criticise a romance, but history denies itself to criticism. It is also true that even the nobler traits of morality are more interesting when they are blended with strong imitations of life, where passion, character, and situation, bring them deeply home to our attention. What is a romance? A collection of imaginary events that we forget as soon as we have read them. What is history? Passing events disfigured, severed, and mutilated by the mistakes or the passions of the writer. Which is the preferable reading—romance, which is forgotten, or history, the errors of which are engraven on the brain? They both alike resemble a magic lanthorn, in which are represented by turns the sun and moon, the clown, God the Father, and Punch and Joan.

RURAL SCENES.

1. A taste for rural scenes seems natural to us: and after seeking in vain for pleasure among the works of art, we are forced to come back, and find that the highest enjoyment is placed in the lovely simplicity of Nature.

“ And mark, untouch'd by city broils, the reign
Of rural comfort, cheerfulness, and ease—
Of health, embloom'd from every sweet briar lane,
And life and morals wholesome as the breeze.”

2. The sight of Nature, in her magnificence or in her beauty, or in her terrors, has, at all times, an overpowering interest, which even habit cannot greatly weaken.

SADNESS.

1. Sadness makes the most indifferent things insupportable; the mirth of others annoying, and their virtue nauseous. It is a ridiculous thing to dress wisdom and virtue with moping and ill humour. Some pretended wise ones seem to fancy they should derogate from their wisdom if they appeared cheerful.

2 Some men teach knowledge so awkwardly, that they make one believe it is a thing learned with difficulty, and is of no great use to those who have learned it.

SAINTS IN GLORY.

1. "The happiness of the elect in heaven will in part consist in witnessing the torments of the damned in hell; and among these may be their own children, parents, husbands, wives, and friends." "Every time they look upon the damned, it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them so to differ." "One part of the business of the blessed is to celebrate the doctrine of reprobation. While the decree of reprobation is externally executing on the *vessels of wrath*, the smoke of their torments will be eternally ascending in the view of the *vessels of mercy*, who, instead of taking the part of those miserable objects, will say, Amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord."—*Emmon's Sermons*.

2. "The saints in glory will be far more sensible how dreadful the wrath of God is, and will understand how terrible the sufferings of the damned are; yet this will be no occasion of grief to them, but rejoicing. They will not be sorry for the damned; it will cause no uneasiness or dissatisfaction to them; but, on the contrary, when they see this sight, it will occasion rejoicing and excite them to joyful praises."—*Edwards's Practical Sermons*. Will not men blush to be thought Christians after this?

SATISFYING OTHERS.

Cherishing the very best intentions, no individual can satisfy all the expectations formed of him.

SCHOOLS.

1. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transactions; and they quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education which they find produce no ability above the rest of mankind—but much pedantry.

2. The greatest clerks are not the wisest men.

3. Men whose minds are deeply laden with the knowledge taught in the schools, and who have acquired a considerable degree of celebrity thereby, are not generally the most free from strange prejudices in favour of their early imbibed principles.

SCORN.

There are cases in which just scorn has always the mastery over just anger.

SECRETS.

1. Secresy is the paltry resource of a narrow mind to give itself consequence; and it generally happens that where much is pretended there is little to conceal; for men of open minds are free and unreserved.

2. The necessity for being secret implies some vice in the act, or some error in the reasoning which leads to its self-justification.

SECTARIANS.

1. Ever preferring the improbable and the marvellous to the natural and the probable, ignorant fanatics have contended for taking in a literal, and therefore in an absurd sense, a thousand expressions which were only meant as figurative and symbolical; and have admitted the most extraordinary deviations from the course of Nature, and from experience, on such partial and questionable evidence as, in the ordinary affairs of man, and in a modern court of justice, would not be received on the most common occasions.

2. When fanatics perform their part with such undoubting confidence, and evince, at the same time, such strength of language and such energy of purpose, it would be difficult for the greatest sceptic to doubt the reality of their enthusiasm, though he may smile at the pretensions to which it gives rise.

SEDUCTIONS.

The old are allured by gold—the young by pleasure—the weak by flattery—cowards by fear—and the courageous by ambition: a thousand baits for each taste, and each bait concealing the same deadly hook.

SEEKERS OF APPLAUSE.

He who depends upon the applause of others, makes the tranquillity of his mind to depend upon the opinion of the vulgar; he willingly deprives himself of his liberty, that he may humour the passions of others; he makes himself uneasy, to please those who behold him; he loves virtue according as the *people* love it; he does good, not for the sake of virtue, but for the sake of his reputation.

SELF-ESTEEM.

Men are commonly despised in proportion to the esteem they seem to have for themselves. The praises which a man bestows on himself, make others believe that he is extremely conceited and vain, and, consequently, raise their contempt, envy, and hatred.

SELFISHNESS.

1. That discretion which has its origin in selfishness is not much to be admired.

2. Such is the debasing effect of interest on the mind, that we generally despise those who are superior to its temptations.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

1. Learning, a great capacity, noble projects, and glorious actions, whereby we are known to others, are often the cause why we do not know ourselves.

2. Theories serve not for self-knowledge, and a man should be placed in different circumstances before he can become well acquainted with his own character and capabilities.

SELF-REPROOFS.

1. There are various sorts of reproofs—innumerable corrections—to which man, in the course of his life, is necessarily subjected; which he feels deeply, yet which appear not to the world: but there is no reproof so stinging as self-reproof; and for a man to be conscious that he has baffled himself, is for him to be as unhappy as man can be.

2. Even the most unprincipled experience a disagreeable feeling, which resembles remorse, when they have fruitlessly made a wicked proposal.

3. Any sudden cause for anxious and mortifying reflection, which, in advanced age, occasions pensive and sullen inactivity, stimulates youth to eager and active exertion.

4. There are times in life, when every man feels as if his sympathies were extinct. The commonest cause is the consciousness of having committed wrong—when the feelings recoil inward, and, by some curious perversity in the nature of our selfishness, instead of prompting atonement, irritate us to repeat and to persevere in our injustice.

5. We need not do that which may lessen us in our own opinion. There are mortifications ready enough in the world to humble us; we do not need to make any for ourselves.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

1. Happiness and pride are absolutely incompatible. Continual vexations, fancied slights and injuries, provoke and wound the self-sufficient mind.

2. We are never more in danger of being subdued than when we think ourselves invincible.

SENSE OF EVANESCENCE.

1. The greatest depths of natural feeling are often accompanied with a sense of transitoriness and delusion, in which particular being appears lost and solved in an indefinite universality. This deep natural sense of evanescence and insignificance is capable of being turned either to sadness or levity.

2. In the bloom of youth and beauty, on the very summit of triumph, power, and joy, there often seizes irresistibly on the mind of man, a deep sense of the fleetingness and nothingness of that existence which he calls his life.

SENSITIVENESS.

1. In slow and solid natures, there is usually a touch of shamefacedness, and a sensitiveness to the breach of petty observances.

2. The elasticity of the human mind is one of its most extraordinary qualities. The man who, at one time, is capable of resting quietly on his pillow with the management and fate of a nation in his hands, is, at another, distracted, harassed, and distressed by the probable event of a horse race. A woman, who has borne misfortunes with fortitude and resignation, will be agitated, tortured, and tormented by the recollection of a single word, look, or action of her own, or of some other individual, to which no human being, besides these two, would attach the smallest importance.

SENTENCE.

A general proposition, but concise, judicious, and energetic, containing some moral truth. A maxim is an instruction given to men respecting what they ought to do; a sentence is a judgment upon what they usually do. The one is a precept of conduct; the other a practical truth.

SERVING OTHERS.

Some who pretend to be considerable men, have no other credit than to make people believe, by their artifices, that they can do a great deal for them, though they have so little power they can do nothing for themselves. A man who pretends to extensive influence would not find so many cullies, if they were not too greedy of the favours which they expect from him, or if they were not too much imposed upon by mere appearances: every thing that glistens dazzles them; every thing that excites them hurries them away; and having their expectations thus raised, they suffer themselves to be led at a man's pleasure.

SICKNESS.

There is something in sickness that breaks down the pride of manhood; that softens the heart and brings it back to feelings of infancy.

SILENCE.

He who can wrap himself up in silence when every word would be in vain, will understand how to connect energy with patience.

SIMPLE LUXURIES.

1. To a mind rightly constituted, there is a real luxury in the simplest gifts of nature, and a fine day is a sensual enjoyment.

2. A career of city pleasure is unfavourable for acquiring a taste for natural beauty, and still more so for forming associations of a sentimental kind, connecting us with the inanimate objects around us.

SLANDERERS.

1. The baseness and mischief of slander would be rooted from society, if hearers forbore to be quiescent accessaries.

2. To permit the misrepresentation of a friend is to share in the slander.

SMALL FORTUNES.

He whom nobody minds does not care for magnificence, or any other worldly vanity: it is the advantage of a small fortune. He whose good or evil fortune affects himself alone, has the best right to pursue it according to his own fancy.

SMUT.

I cannot hear a lewd tale, or any indelicate equivocations, or inuendos and loose words, without being full of indignation against those who speak them. It is very difficult for those who are present at such conversations, when some men make bold to say anything, without regard to modesty, to preserve their virtue; because the sensual thoughts that are raised in their minds will excite them to afford to the senses all the libidinous pleasures which have been represented to their imagination.

SOCIETY.

1. If we live in the narrow circle of ignorance, we are spared the pain of knowing many an evil; and, surely, in much knowledge there is sadness of heart.

“Society itself, which should create
Kindness, destroys what little we had got.”

2. There is a species of habit which carries many men into a certain society at a certain hour, without expecting or receiving any particular degree of gratification, or even amusement.

SOCRATES AND SENECA.

Socrates and Seneca were both put to death for avowing their opinions favourable to truth, in opposition to the established superstition of their times.

SOLITUDE AND SAINTS.

Solitude is favourable to feelings of self-importance; and it is when alone, and occupied with their own thoughts, that fanatics have reveries, and imagined saints lose themselves in visionary extacies.

SORROWS.

That passive sorrow, long endured, and which, not discovering itself in outward show, sinks deep into the heart, and throws over life a cast of diffidence and melancholy, is quite as affecting as that which exhibits emotions violent as the hurricane.

SPECULATIVE ABSTRACTION.

Mortals, especially at the well appetized age which precedes twenty years, are seldom so much engaged, either by real or conjectural

subjects of speculation, but what their earthly wants claim their hour of attention.

SPONTANEOUS PRODUCTION.

There is nothing eternal, unalterable, but the ensemble of universal modes. There can nothing new be originated in Nature; no new genus can ever arise: the doctrine of spontaneous production, or animation without the natural procreative means, is false: what is called equivocal generation only discovers the defect of science in the knowledge of the means by which some natural species are propagated. To say, also, that instead of existing externally, any natural order originated in chance, or fortuitous combination, is absurdity. Every combination of bodies produced by the art of man can only be a partial determination of affinities or deviation from natural modes: a hybrid, or a metallic composition, can only be sustained until the process of decomposition shall restore them to the general orders of natural perpetuities.

STAGE OF LIFE.

1. There is no one but enters a perfect novice upon the stage of life; the follies of the fathers are all lost upon their children, and do not seem to instruct them at all.

2. We observe the aged, the infirm, and those engaged in occupations of imminent hazard, trembling, as it were, upon the very brink of non-existence; but we derive no lesson from the precariousness of their tenure of life, until it has altogether failed.

STARVATION.

Where one person meets a premature death from the want of a sufficiency of food, one thousand might be found to have met with such a death by the practice of loading their stomachs with too great a quantity.

STATION IN LIFE.

Man, so far from being able to adapt his circumstances to his faculties, is often, with a spirit equal to the highest station, left to linger in the lowest.

STOMACH.

1. The seat whence most chronic disorders originate is the stomach: it is therefore not only the quality but the quantity of what we eat which ought to be attended to.

2. Old people eat more than young people, and suffer fewer inconveniences from their gluttony.

STUDIES.

1. The whole tendency of the young intellect is to acquire positive knowledge, while teachers, in direct opposition to Nature,

deprave and torment them, with words without meaning, or relating to things which they cannot understand. Whatever is spoken of, should be shown in Nature first; for it is useless to speak of things which children have never seen, heard, felt, tasted, nor smelt. The instruction that is given in common colleges is more a communication of signs than ideas. By this constrained and yawning study, the conceptions are rendered slow and indolent, and many children are deterred from learning things to which they would have attended with pleasure had their understandings been exercised in a practical way. The Latin terms crammed into the heads of students, neither give them the habitual power of reflection, nor serve to cultivate attention.

2. The proper degree of exercise is an important point in education. Too much application weakens, or even exhausts the faculties—both feelings and intellect. Early geniuses often become ordinary men. The mental operations, when too active, are frequently injurious; and it is necessary to keep up the equilibrium between the organs and the functions—body and mind—and between the individual faculties.

STYLE.

Style is not merely a tissue of words, but the general combination and exhibition of ideas; it depends upon the greater or less stores of the mind, habits of expression, modes of reasoning, play of the fancy, &c.; all which may be produced or determined by the study of particular authors in every language.

SUBSERVIENCY.

It often happens, owing, I suppose, to perversity, that subserviency in trifles is more difficult to a proud mind than compliance in matters of more importance.

SUFFERING.

1. There is frequently a mixture of the ludicrous with real suffering, which renders it unfit for description.

2. The curiosity we excite in indifferent persons is the more particularly insupportable and vexatious, when we are in a state of suffering and wish to conceal it.

3. Sorrows and fear sometimes make sufferers eloquent.

SUNDAY.

Honest and worthy citizens, who are willing to bind themselves to the strictest observance of laws founded in morality for securing the safety of person and honest dealing in society, cannot rest satisfied at being subjected to a compulsory conformity with the observance of a day held by the superstitiously ignorant as sacred to idleness, under a pretended commandment given by a fabled monster, who is represented by the Mosaical imposture as ordering a man to be stoned to

death for picking up a few sticks to light his fire on a Sabbath ! The judicature of the United States is disgraced as long as their courts shall serve as holy tribunals to answer the ends of priests, by sentencing to fines and imprisonment those prosecuted, at their instance, for acts of utility performed on the Christian's Sabbath. That is a land of slavery, and worse than papal despotism, where this Christian tyranny prevails, and in which a citizen may not regulate such actions, as keeping or not keeping a day in sacred idleness, by his own discretion.

SUPERFICIAL MEN.

Superficial men deem it nothing to know any matter unless others are made aware of it.

SUPERIOR TALENT.

1. He in whom the reflective faculties lie torpid and useless, may have that power which wealth and fortune involve, but can never aspire to that empire over the minds of men which constitutes the true aristocracy and dignity of human nature.

2. Social superiority is not maintainable without a certain superiority of knowledge and intellect.

3. Even a just conviction of our powers—a pardonable vanity in the consciousness of our own superiority—are dangerous symptoms to exhibit to the world in the midst of success and prosperity : in misfortune and poverty they will not in the least be tolerated. These bring you still more in collision with groundling ignorance and vulgarity ; and when we see how little sympathy intelligence and refinement show for higher pretensions, can we wonder that, in lower grades, disputes, mortifications, ignominies, disappointments, and insults, punish the indulgence of a similar spirit.

SUPERLUNARY RESEARCHES.

1. Mankind seem to value nothing that is natural. We can perceive every thing that is useful to be known ; but we leave the purest and the most simple knowledge to go in search of, and bewilder our minds about phantoms. We first court difficulties and unattainable objects, and then lament our own defects. What shade of reason have we to talk about spirits ? What analogy have we to induce us to expect more than a mortal life ? Why did it begin ? Eternal individuality of sensible existence would be too dreary a prospect. We cannot enjoy anything but for a time ; we satiate under the most delightful pleasures ; and we grow tired of sensible existence.

2. Aspirating minds wander incessantly round the gulf of ideas that are not tangible ; but the intellect fatigues itself in vain in attempting to scale the heavens—to exalt itself above humanity.

3. They can never be too much blamed who spend their time in searching the reason of things that have no existence, and who

divert the force of their minds to the prejudice of truth. It were much better to admit such things to be fables than to attempt reasoning about them.

SUPERSTITION.

1. The weak and ignorant are apt to mistake their superstitious terrors for moral impressions.

2. When not arrayed in her full horrors, superstition had charms which we fail not to regret, even in those stages of society from which her influence is well nigh banished by the light of reason and general education: at least, in more ignorant periods, her system of ideal terrors had something in them interesting to minds which had few means to excitement.

“ But lost to me, forever lost those joys,
Which reason scatters, and which time destroys.”

3. People, even of tolerable education, have, in our time, sought the retreat of a fortune-teller upon a frolic, as it is termed, and yet not always in a disposition absolutely sceptical towards the responses they receive.

SWEARERS.

A swearer is a passionate, or an inconsiderate, or a licentious man—or one whose education has been very much neglected: every one of these is odious to a well-bred man.

TAKING OFFENCE.

To catch too soon at an offence shows a weak judgment.

TASTE.

Taste is that delicate faculty by which one perceives the beauties and defects of any thing, either in Nature or art.

TEMPER.

1. More misery is produced around us by the irregularity of our tempers than by real misfortunes.

2. It is beneath the dignity of rationality to be incessantly bickering with the persons and things about us; and he who exhibits this kind of anger, may be considered as highly infected with the disease of unhappiness, a perpetual breaker of domestic peace, and, consequently, a vicious and morally depraved person.

TEMPERAMENT.

1. Temperament is that state or constitution of the brain and nervous system, according to which a man thinks and feels, and through which he is more or less affected by external agents.

2. It is a matter of great concern to reflect seriously on the follies and mischiefs which arise out of a general peevishness, or a display of anger at every trifle that happens. This disposition of mind and

body operates against us both physically and morally; makes us despised in person and injured in property; at once a perpetual torment to ourselves and to every living thing about us; cool reflection upon the subject, with a resolution to check the irritable nerve, is the only remedy.

3. In our dwellings every thing ought to be tranquil and serene.

4. The most abhorred thing in nature is the face that smiles abroad, and flashes fury when it returns to the lap of a tender, helpless family.

5. One unquiet, perverse disposition disturbs the peace and unanimity of a whole family.

6. Ill-humour is a fault to which I bear an entire antipathy.

7. The resentment of a quiet and patient person has always in it something formidable to the professed and habitual grumbler.

8. When the heart is sick, the temper is but too apt to catch a tinge of sourness.

9. He is happy whose circumstances suit his temper; but he is more excellent who can conform his temper to any circumstances.

TIME AND CHANCE FOR ALL.

Were the affairs of the world to be guided implicitly by human wisdom, or were they uniformly to fall out according to the conjectures of human foresight, events would be no longer under the domination of that time and chance which happen unto all men; since we should, in the one case, work out our own purposes to a certainty, by our own skill, and, in the other, regulate our conduct according to the views of unerring prescience.

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

“ But of all Nature’s discrepancies, none,
Upon the whole, is greater than the difference
Beheld between the country and the town;
Of which the latter merits every preference
From those who have few resources of their own,
And only think, or act, or feel, with reference
To some small plan of interest or ambition—
Both which are limited to no condition.”

The inhabitant of a solitary country is affected with the sensation of giddy astonishment when, for the first time, he finds himself in the streets of a large and populous city—an unit in the midst of thousands.

TRAVELS.

1. We should not judge of the rest of the world by what we see going on around ourselves, but walk abroad into other parts, and thereby enlarge our sphere of observation, as well as ripen our judgment of things.

2. There is nothing, perhaps, that opens the human mind so effectually, or frees it so soon from early prejudices, as travelling. A man cannot believe in the infallibility of two or of twenty

religions, each one opposed to the others; and he perceives that the most perfect devotion on the part of whole nations to any religious principles, is no reason whatever for pronouncing those principles to be true. The traveller learns, too, that public opinion varies in every country; and that, unless he can establish some standard of right and wrong, more stable than orthodoxy and popularity, propriety will be determined by the degrees of latitude and longitude.

TROUBLED PERIODS.

1. Those who, in peaceful times, are most ambitious of authority among others, shrink from the competition at such eventful periods, when neither ease nor parade attend the possession of it; and when it gives only a painful pre-eminence both in danger and in labour, and exposes the ill-fated chieftain to the murmurs of his discontented associates, as well as to the first assault of the common enemy.

2. In troublesome times, men's vices are forgotten, so they display activity, courage, and prudence—the virtues then most required.

3. In revolutions, stern and high principles are often obliged to give way to the current of existing circumstances; and, in many a case, where wars have been waged for points of metaphysical right, they have been at last gladly terminated, upon the mere hope of obtaining general tranquillity.

4. There are two sorts of men whom situations of guilt, terror, and commotion bring forward as prominent agents. The first are spirits so naturally moulded and fitted for deeds of horror, that they stalk forth from their lurking places like actual demons to work in their native element: the second class of these unfortunate beings are involved in evil rather by the concurrence of external circumstances than by natural inclination.

TRUTH.

1. We must either conform to all the fluctuating errors of the day, and of the circle in which we live, or we must search out the truth for ourselves; and to arrive at it, pierce through all the obstacles that stupidity or wickedness have placed in our way.

2. Principles of truth and simplicity established in our minds, as the rules of our conduct, emancipate us from all other shackles.

TYRANNIZING.

1. The mind revolts against the power which displays pride or pleasure in finding fault, and is wounded by the bare suspicion of such disgraceful tyranny.

2. A powerful clown is a tyrant in the most ugly form he can possibly appear.

UNCERTAINTY.

Uncertainty is the severest of human ills. Even the situation of the wretched can be rendered more wretched by suspense.

UNGENEROUS TRAIT.

There is a remarkable want of generosity in the hearts of men which excites them to put themselves on their guard against the most ordinary communications immediately they perceive an earnest desire to be informed of a thing. They seem to suspect a concealed interest in affairs the most simple, and to apprehend they may commit themselves by unwittingly conferring a benefit greater than they might be aware of.

UNSOPHISTICATED AGE.

In youth, there is a sort of freemasonry which, without much conversation, teaches young persons to estimate each other's characters, and places them at ease on the briefest acquaintance. It is only when taught deceit by the commerce of the world that we learn to shroud our character from observation, and to disguise our real sentiments from those with whom we are placed in communion.

VANITY.

Vanity will make a man endure almost as much as zeal.

VENERATION FOR OLD AGE.

The prejudiced respect for age, impressed upon our ideal faculties in youth, is as strikingly undeceived by our experience and knowledge, as the prejudiced awe with which we are in like manner impressed towards the fabled God Almighty. When we become acquainted with the religious wickedness, superstitious ignorance, hardened obduracy, rapacious appetites, and selfish depravity of old people—instead of honour, we find them to merit our utter contempt and detestation. It is only where there has been virtue enough during youth and manhood to erase from the mind the falsehoods of depraved and vulgar education, to reconcile the ideas with Nature, and purify the desires of the heart from the base and greedy covetousness of possessing money and power, that old age can be regarded with esteem and veneration. A long life passed without learning any thing from Nature and experience, only excites abhorrence and contempt.

VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

Surely, is it possible, that any reasonable being, that has any right sense of justice or mercy, would be willing to accept forgiveness of his sins on such terms? Would he not rather go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the penalties due to his crimes, rather than the innocent should suffer? Nay, was he so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved through such a mediation, would it not prove that he stood in opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice?

VICIOUS HABITS.

1. Bad actions are less fatal to happiness and virtue by themselves than by the vices of which a habit is contracted from them in weak and corrupt minds. In a strong and sensible mind, remorse inspires the necessity of good conduct and correct habits which diminish its bitterness.

2. Indulgence begets desire, and desire betrays integrity, and corrupts the heart.

3. The wicked are not always so happy, nor the good so unhappy as is imagined; and vice is, nine times out of ten, its own punishment.

4. None can drink of the cup of vice with impunity.

VICIOUS SHAME.

Such is human weakness, under present modes of education, that we are less ashamed, perhaps, of supposed vice, than of real poverty.

VICISSITUDES.

1. Without penetrating into the deeper sources of the moral, we are often compelled to observe how near the complete possession of human objects is to a change of prosperity.

2. It seldom happens that any period of human existence, whether extensive or contracted, passes by without some circumstance occurring calculated to produce painful sensations.

3. To those who lie out of the road of great afflictions, are assigned petty vexations, which answer all the purpose of disturbing their serenity.

4. It is when prosperity is at the highest, that our prudence should be awake and vigilant, to prevent misfortune.

5. The griefs of the powerful and the fortunate are often mingled with the impatience of uninterrupted prosperity.

6. Those in sorrow will better bear ill news than those whom it surprises in the presence of content and happiness.

VINDICATED AFFECTIONS.

He that is too proud to vindicate the affections and confidence which he conceives should be given without solicitation, must meet much, and, perhaps, deserved disappointment.

VIRTUE.

1. Should you even preserve your life at the expense of virtue, you are not sure that you have prolonged existence for one instant; but you are sure that you have rendered the rest of it contemptible.

“————— Oh! pursue,
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul
Which urge you on to virtue. Let not danger
Nor the encountering world make faint your purpose.”

2. To have them in perfection, the virtues cannot be separated;

they are mutually dependent; remove one, and all the rest are enfeebled or destroyed.

VIVACITY.

1. There is no mistake greater than that into which people fall, who fancy a lively disposition an insensible one; those whose feelings are always alive, whose passions are capable of strong excitement, and whose animal spirits are the lightest and most volatile, are those upon whom sad sudden changes from happiness to misery have the most poignant effect.

2. In great calamities it sometimes happens that light and frivolous spirits resume their elasticity and presence of mind sooner than those of loftier character.

VOLUPTUARIES.

The mere listlessness of the hacknied voluptuary's appetites becomes at length a sufficient penalty for having made it the principal object of his enjoyment and cultivation.

VULGAR ERROR.

The motion of a horse hair, when immersed for some time in tepid water, has given cause for the false notion that the hair has become animated and metamorphosed into a living creature. The following is the theory of its motion. Whenever a tissue or fibre of animal or vegetable substance has been steeped for a sufficient time in water that is pure, undisturbed, and moderately warm, this tissue becomes in some degree affected by maceration, and its tendency to decomposition is hastened or favoured; its filaments separate, and there likewise takes place a disunion or breaking apart of the vital globules, or organized corpuscles, of which each filament is composed: these same corpuscles themselves tend to a rapid dissolution of their vital consistency. If this process be examined through a microscope, it will be seen in what manner the mechanism of movement is accomplished. The organic globules have all an oblong shape, which is the form into which magnetism determines all ductile bodies: as some of these are disengaged, the force of this operation acts upon the others still in adhesion, and which form the main substance of the tissue, and occasions the vibratory motion perceptible and construed to result from animal will or life. The movement of some of the corpuscles which glide along between the layers of loosened filament constituting the hair, and which are determined by their loss of gravity towards the openings that admit of their escape, occasions its serpentine movement in the water. The gravitating and magnetic repulsions to which the other globules of similar consistency are liable, in the same manner account for their rapid and fantastic undulations, which appear so strange, and which have given rise to the error in supposing the frame of man to be composed of an infinite number of living animalcules, which have

been called *monades*. What are called animalcules are nothing but the elementary organized particles of which the substances of all animals and vegetables are constituted. In the course of decomposition, some of these constituent globules revolve with celerity on themselves, and this movement in them is, like that of planets and stars, an effect of expansion counteracted by repression. All these several acts of expansion or magnetism give to the substances in infusion, the appearance of animal life; but they are not animals, however; and if withdrawn from the water, the horse hair will always be found to be a horse hair, and the revolving globule an inanimate particle. There are no animals, the movements of which are restricted to a vibration, or rotation on themselves, without the faculty of locomotion, or ranging from one place to another. The notion that the simple organic constituent parts of animals and plants, when dissociated, are capable of independent life, arises from connecting the idea of animation with that motion incident to the progress of decomposition or resolution of corpuscular substance into its chemical principles, fitting it for combination with atmospheric air. From the zoophyte up to man, it is proved that there is an absolute identity in the structure of all the different tissues of the animal organization.

VULGAR SECTARIANS.

Crusted with prejudice, always ready to commit ruffianly outrage upon the man who would remove from their eyes the bandage of ignorance which superstition has bound round them, the vulgar scarcely merit the pains taken to set their judgment right; but pity may grant what obstinacy and false pride would refuse.

WANT.

The prospect of want is worse than actual privation. Man appears to be the only animal in existence whose exertions exceed his necessities.

WANT OF SPIRIT.

1. Let it appear that we set a value upon ourselves, but without despising others. If we fall into either of the extremes, we either provoke men's pride by our insolence, or teach them to despise us by our timorous submission, and by the mean opinion which we seem to entertain of ourselves.

2. We never excuse the absolute want of spirit and dignity of character, or a proper sense of what is due to ourselves in society and in the common intercourse of life.

WAVERING COURAGE.

When, whether from our state of animal spirits, want of confidence in the justice of our cause, or any other motive, our own courage happens to be in a wavering condition, nothing tends so

much altogether to disconcert us, as a great appearance of promptitude on the part of our antagonist.

WEAK SIDE.

Every man has his weak side; and it is very often the case that this weak side is the best part of the man.

WEALTH.

A people could scarcely be found, among whom the accumulation of enormous fortunes by particular individuals, did not engender a spirit of aristocracy on one side, and abasement on the other: all that is desirable, therefore, for a republic is, that easy circumstances only should be enjoyed generally by the citizens, without so great a disparity of condition as to lead to the destruction of every kind of civil equality.

WITCHES.

If, in past times, those who were deemed witches had been permitted to speak in their own defence, before those who were not prepossessed against them, not a single one of them would have been murdered.

WITTICISMS.

1. Many attempts to be witty, indicate a trivial understanding and superficial knowledge.

2. When we are over anxious to shine, we generally fall short of our ordinary standard.

WORLD.

According to the doctrine of modern theology, the world is but a mere appendix to chaos.

WORSHIPPERS OF PLUTUS.

1. The worshippers of Plutus regard with an evil eye the brother who enjoys the smiles of the Deity in a superior degree to themselves; thinking, perhaps, that their own portion would be larger, were it not for the accumulations of this favoured individual.

2. There is a sort of doltheads, dull-brained and stupid, but who are, nevertheless, endowed with the art or talent—the peculiar instinct of selfishness—that of keenly calculating their gains; and they grow rich without its being known how, or with what object.

YOUTHFUL HOPES.

It is a melancholy pleasure with which those who have long followed the pursuits of life, and are sensible of their vanity, regard the gay, young, and buoyant spirits, to whom life, as yet, is only hope and promise.

BIBLE OF REASON.

CHAPTER XII.

SINGLE LIFE—COURTSHIP—DISAPPOINTMENTS—MARRIAGE—CONNU-
BIAL HAPPINESS OR MISERY—FEMALE CHARACTER.

1. I would not advise any single gentleman hastily to conclude that he is in distress. Bachelors are discontented and wish for wives. What is gained by the change? We know what we are, but we know not what we may be.

2. The difficult spirit, in quest of a companion of kindred qualities, dwelling in visionary meditation on the images created by fancy, passed through life without having found a congenial character.

3. It usually happens, more especially to the enthusiastic and imaginative, that, having formed a picture of admiration in their own mind, they too often deceive themselves by some faint resemblance in some existing being whom their fancy as speedily as gratuitously invests with all the attributes necessary to complete the *beau ideal* of mental perfection. No one, perhaps, even in the happiest marriage, with an object really beloved, ever found all the qualities he expected to possess; but, in far too many cases, he finds he has practised a much higher degree of mental deception, and has erected his airy castle of felicity upon some rainbow, which owed its very existence only to the peculiar state of the atmosphere.

4. Suppose that the hopes of ambition are crowned with the fullest accomplishment. Fame, wealth, rank, honours—all have been sought, all have been won! Alas! where is she who should have shared them? Where is she whose smile of joy at our triumph would have been far more sweet than the triumph itself—whose gratified pride in our success would have been the highest joy with which the heart of man can swell? Again that spirit, outwardly so prosperous, exclaims, in the secrecy of its own communings, “All, even this is vanity!” Again it feels that there is nothing which can fill the place of engrossing love within the human heart.

“’Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come.”

5. Who is there that has forgotten—who ever can forget, the first avowal of mutual passion between himself and the woman of his chosen love? The place, the hour, every accessory circumstance—are they not before him now? The look of fond abandonment at

last unchecked ; the tone of fondness no longer dissembled : do we not see those eyes beam, do we not hear that dear, dear voice, as it spoke to us modulated in the key of enthralling love ? Does not our memory almost heat our senses, and give to us its own creation as realities ?

6. The relative situation of adviser and advised, of protector and protected, is so peculiarly suited to the respective conditions of man and woman, that great progress towards intimacy is often made in very short space ; for the circumstances call for confidence on the part of the gentleman, and forbid coyness on that of the lady ; so that the usual barriers against easy intercourse are at once thrown down.

7. There are some men, advanced in life, whom we could fancy making love with far less indecorum than some who are younger. The reason is, that the former are young in spirit, and can pay their attentions with a grace, a pertinence, and a vivacity, that, in rescuing love from the common place of mere animal passion, at once makes up for the want of youth by the charm of society.

8. The conversations of lovers are like law suits—not very interesting, except to those immediately concerned in them.

“ To write, to sigh, and to converse—
For years to play the fool—
Is to put passion out to nurse,
And send the heart to school.
Love, all at once, should from the earth
Start up full grown and tall ;
If not an Adam at its birth,
It is no love at all.”

9. Though to have loved *before*, is no injustice to the person we love at *present*, yet the knowledge that we have done so, piques a lover's vanity, and he cannot forgive the woman who has found any man worthy to make an impression on her, till she had the good fortune to see himself.

10. A man marries his cook, who, in divesting herself of her apron to accompany him to church, protests her devotedness and her affection ; on her return, she forgets she had ever worn it, and before the week ends she commands imperiously her husband and his servants.

“ Better a beggar, than to find me tied
To art and spite, to insolence and pride.”

11. It is better to be laughed at than ruined ; better to have a wife who, like Martial's Mamurra, cheapens every thing, and buys nothing, than to be impoverished by one whose vanity will purchase every thing, but whose pride will cheapen nothing.

12. I scarcely know one householder who has not, on some ill-omened and most inconvenient season, announced suddenly to his innocent helpmate, that he had invited

“ Some odious Major Rock
To drop in at six o'clock,”

to the great discomposure of the lady, and the discredit, perhaps, of her domestic arrangements.

13. Let not those who enter into an union for life, without those embarrassments which are, perhaps, necessary to excite an enthusiastic passion, augur worse of their future happiness because their own alliance is formed under calmer auspices. Mutual esteem, an intimate knowledge of each other's character, a suitability in degree and fortune—in taste and pursuits—these are more frequently found in a marriage of reason than in an union of romantic attachment, where the imagination, which probably created the virtues and accomplishments with which it invested the beloved object, is frequently afterwards employed in magnifying the mortifying consequences of its own delusion, and exasperating all the strings of disappointment.

14. When the parties are on a perfect equality in wealth, condition, and education, and intimately acquainted with each other's thoughts and feelings before marriage; and when no motive whatever exists but genuine affection to induce a union, it is most likely that marriages so formed will be more pleasurable than any that have yet been.

15. As unions are often formed between couples differing in complexion and station, they take place still more frequently between persons totally differing in feelings, in taste, in pursuits, and in understanding; and it would not be saying, perhaps, too much, to aver that two-thirds of the marriages around us have been contracted by persons, who, judging *à priori*, we should have thought had scarce any charms for each other.

16. When either party fix their attachment upon the substantial comforts of a rental, or a jointure, they cannot be disappointed in the acquisition, although they may be cruelly so in their own estimation of the happiness it was to afford, or in having too slightly anticipated the disadvantages with which it was to be attended.

17. Have I not seen a household where love was not—where, although there was worth, and good will, and enough of the means of life—all was embittered by regrets which were not only vain, but criminal?

18. Marriage is not commonly unhappy but as life is unhappy; and most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their natures would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

19. In an unhappy marriage, there is a degree of suffering which exceeds any other human affliction.

20. A regard to decency, and the common punctilios of life, has kept many a married couple unseparated; and it frequently preserves a polite intercourse, where both love and friendship have been wanting.

21. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to those whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their lives in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are for the sake of the feelings of their partners, or the welfare of their

mutual offspring; those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of miserable discord and hostility.

22. Nothing breaks down health so effectually as the constant uneasiness excited by being united to an irritable person, who is either drawing largely and frequently upon the good nature of his wife, or, what is worse for both parties, gradually creating in her a disposition similar to his own.

23. Alas! how often is seen the female, pale, and wretched, and degraded, still following with patient constancy the footsteps of some domineering tyrant, and submitting to all his brutality.

24. A woman must be much worn down indeed by pain and suffering when she totally loses all respect for her external appearance.

25. Most of the differences that arise between man and wife are occasioned by the attempts of the latter to break through the bounds of dependence which Nature has assigned to her. A woman insures the good graces of her husband by conforming always to his will, and accustoming herself to yield up her own.

26. The good sense of a well-informed woman readily instructs her that a silent example, and an easy unrepining behaviour, will be always more persuasive than the severity of lectures and accusations.

27. A compromise, which we would recommend to all managing matrons, is, never to interfere with their husbands' whims or prejudices; for it is surprising how much real power will be cheerfully resigned to the fair sex, for the pleasure of being allowed to ride one's hobby in peace and quiet.

28. The first and most important quality in a woman is mildness: scolding and obstinacy will ever increase her sufferings, and augment the perversity of her husband.

29. It is only the informed, the refined, the cultivated woman who can entertain her husband.

30. Cheerful, animated, and elegant intercourse, forms a main part of the bond of union between intellectual and well-bred persons.

31. Let me tell the libertine of fancy, when he despises understanding in woman, that the mind, which he disregards, gives life to the enthusiastic affection, from which rapture, short-lived as it is, alone can flow! What are the cold or feverish caresses of appetite, but sin embracing death, compared with the modest overflowings of a pure heart and exalted imagination?

32. Intelligence goes far to make up for all deficiencies of form or feature, while it gives a finish and an enchantment to the highest order of beauty, that can by no other means be imparted. It likewise confers happiness and pleasure on many long hours, which would, by the ignorant and listless, be spent in yawning vacuity, and all the horrors of ennui. It is by this very means, indeed, that it improves beauty; for according to the unalterable laws of habit, the face that habituates itself to wear the ruffled and cloudy

aspect of weariness and dissatisfaction, will not be readily smoothed into good humour, nor into the calm, tender mien of pensive feeling.

33. When I see a taste for reading in a female, I forget her little foibles, and am quite willing to overlook even affectation, which I rate the worst of them.

34. There are women, who, with elegant manners, cultivated minds, and liberal sentiments, are formed for the delight and instruction of all around them ; who can both give and receive information with pleasure, and are qualified to discharge all the relative duties of life with firmness, dignity, and precision ; and there are others, who, without much information or strength of character, win our affection and esteem by the simplicity of their manners, the vivacity of their tempers, and the amiable sweetness of their whole deportment : happy is the man who has found one of either description to be the partner of his griefs, his joys, and his comforts ; he has secured one of the first essentials to happiness, and will find the pleasure of his life exalted by participation, and its evils diminished.

35. In all civilized society, the females of distinguished rank and beauty give the tone to manners, and through these even to morals.

36. Beauty gives, for the time, its own charm to any attire, however awkward—to every fashion, however absurd.

37. Beauty is almost always a fatal gift, for which a woman pays but too dearly.

38. It is extremely difficult to maintain the full dignity of an offended person in the presence of a beautiful girl, whatever reasons we may have for being angry with her.

39. There are some women of true sense, who are generous and sincere, but the number is small.

40. In women of reputation and delicacy, real love is but friendship of an exalted kind; and love founded on that basis is alone unchangeable.

41. True love and true sensibility cannot exist without virtue: every weak being will ever think he loves, and will ever be incapable of feeling that passion.

42. True love is not used to making many professions.

"I've also seen some female friends * *

* * * * *

That faithful were through thick and thin, abroad,

At home, —————
Who did not quit me when oppression trod
Upon me ; whom no scandal could remove ;
Who fought, and fight, in absence, too, my battles."

43. Man only learns the worth, the importance, and the bliss of life, when he loves.

44. What odd creatures are women ; a lover always falls short with them in spite of himself. They grieve, they resent, they accuse ; and when one most deserves their pity, or comes to them full of the most tender transports, we find ourselves hated and abjured ! They

would be more just, if they were less delicate: over refined souls always find something to condemn.

45. Some women are so different in the morning from what they had been the preceding evening, that, "I love you," to-night, seems to be tantamount to, "I shall hate you," to-morrow.

46. There are few women, particularly if they have met with disappointments, who are not proud, jealous, envious, revengeful, liars, unprincipled, cruel, and insidious. In the generality of women, everything relating to the mind is little, illiberal, and narrow; their sentiments are not the result of reflection, but of imitation; they have no enlarged views of human nature—no principle of action but their immediate interest, their pleasure, or amusement.

47. An illiterate woman, if her natural abilities are good, is dangerous; if not, she is generally contemptible.

48. Compared with the woman who is really depraved, the most unprincipled and seductive Lovelace can never be more than a novice.

49. Sweet, insinuating, and fertile in expedients, there is no art which some women will not employ to allure and fascinate the hearts of those who address them; but once assured of their ascendancy—a capricious and absolute command is assumed in the place of timidity, gentleness, and complaisance; and it is not till after having loved them, that we find they rather merited our entire hatred.

" ——— There are soft smiled and gentle words,
And there are faces skilful to put on
The look we trust—and 'tis mockery all."

50. Women alone possess the secret of learning every thing they wish to know, by indirectly insinuating questions with inimitable address.

51. A female knows so soon, (and that, too, without appearing to inform herself about them,) all the habits of a beloved object.

52. Every woman knows that it is easier to rid herself of a rival than to reclaim an inconstant lover.

53. When the will of woman is strongly bent on the accomplishment of her purpose, her wits are seldom baffled by difficulties, however embarrassing.

54. Women's wits are said to be quick in spying the surest means of avenging a real or supposed slight.

55. The period at which love is felt most strongly is seldom that at which there is much prospect of its being brought to a happy issue.

56. Nothing can be felt more severely than the conflict experienced by tender and well-disposed hearts, when circumstances place them between love and duty.

57. No degree of hopeless love, however desperate and sincere, can ever continue for years to embitter life.

58. Unrequited love is not nearly so tormenting as mutual attachment defeated by the interference of cruel relations. Regret results

from the one—misery from the other; the one may be forgotten—the other must be always an object of memory: those only who know the intensity of reciprocal and virtuous attachment, can imagine the horrors attending its disappointment.

59. Never do we know how much we love—never do we feel how necessary the object of our love is to our happiness, until we experience the weary void of separation.

60. A ceremonious arrangement of attire is very much allied with formality, and a preconceived determination to treat a lover with cold politeness.

“ ————— Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay,
It useth an enforced ceremony.”
“ There are no tricks in plain and simple faith.”

61. Love, like the ague, is subject to paroxysms; there are some days we seem to be cured; at others, we are at death's door.

62. If ever two people, who love one another, come to a rupture, it is for want of a timely *eclaircissement*—a full and precise one without witnesses or mediators, and without reserving any one disagreeable circumstance for the mind to brood upon in silence.

63. Where there is an intention to break an engagement, and cancel whatever love has been felt between two hearts, such is the human character, pretexts are never wanting to justify the resolve.

64. Certainty, however melancholy, is an evil better endured by many constitutions than the feverish contrast between passion and duty.

65. If men did but know the pangs which even the lightness of their conduct occasions, unless they were very fiends, they could not continue to act in their general manner towards women! They never can know what a woman feels on desertion, or even slight; it is not in our nature to feel such things in the same degree as they do; the early doubt—the gradual decline of hope—and, at last, the sick despair of certainty! Are their hearts human, that they can inflict these sufferings on the beings who love them to very madness; and, as it were, as punishment for that love itself?

66. What are the phases of a woman's feelings when she finds herself deserted? Upon the full trusting fondness of her affection, comes first the startling doubt, driven back and repelled with mingled scorn and dread—but again and again recurring with increased force, till, after suspense which gnaws into the heart, it settles down into the sick certainty of despair. And then her cheek grows thin, and her lips pale, and the light of an ardent spirit fades from her eyes. The strength of her young affection is broken for ever; she loves one, and, in cold resignation, she marries another; and she looks on the present without joy, on the future without hope, and on the past with anguish.

67. Alas! men do not know how to love like women. Their attachment is only one of a thousand other passions and predilections;

they are daily engaged in pleasures which blunt their feelings, and in business which distracts them. We—we sit at home to weep, and to think how coldly the warmth of our own affections is repaid

“—————How deep
Is woman's memory of her first love dream,
Though truth has chilled its sweet illusions !”

68. Men probably know but little of what passes in the secret heart of woman ; and how little does woman dare to say, far less to write, that which might illuminate them : who shall ever penetrate into the recesses of a tender bosom, and who shall tell how devoted is the heart of her who loves ?

69. How much the meanest and basest of all selfishness is man's !

70. There is a deep, dreamy, lovely melancholy, which often bespeaks in woman's gaze, the habit of preferring the romance of earthly things to their truth ; and which reveals also her natural disposition to sigh after an unknown something better than even the most exquisite of earthly romances can supply.

71. There are some points on which it is in vain to contend with a woman—and religion, or any thing that takes the name of religion, is among them.

72. When a comely girl takes to a devout turn, I can scarcely help thinking that it is only for want of some handsome young fellow to whisper it out of her in the course of a week, and put any thing he pleases in its place.

73. There is no friend to man so true, so kind, so real, and so good, as woman.

74. Women, accustomed continually to conceal their thoughts from men, are industrious, above all, to dissemble the springs that move their tenderness ; and she has little to boast in never having fallen, who owes this happiness less to her virtue, than to the opinion she had the art to create of it in others.

75. It is more easy to inspire a woman with a new passion than it is to bring her to a recital of her former ones.

76. There is no time when a woman does so little justice to the character of a surviving lover, as when comparing him with the preferred rival of whom she has been recently deprived.

77. Ladies will sooner pardon want of sense in those who address them, than want of manners.

78. Nothing can be more affecting and powerful in reaching the heart of woman, than the efforts she sees made to respect her.

79. Perhaps, if our fair readers will take the trouble to consult their own bosoms, they will be disposed to allow, that the distinguished good taste exhibited by any individual who, when his attentions would be agreeable to a whole circle of rivals, selects one as their individual object—entitles him, on the footing of reciprocity, if on no other, to a large share of that one's favourable, and even partial esteem.

80. The regard of women is generally much influenced by the estimation which an individual maintains in the opinion of men.

81. When was the eye of woman too lofty to overlook the passionate devotion of a lover, however inferior in degree?

82. It is seldom that a woman disposes of her own heart : circumstances generally decide her lot.

83. They think vilely and falsely of women, who deem that they love the gratification of their vanity, or the mean purpose of engrossing a lover's admiration and devotion, better than they love the virtue and honour of the man they may be brought to prefer.

84. It is an admirable quality in womankind, that when a breach of the laws of natural affection comes under their observation, the whole sex is in arms.

85. Jealousy has been deemed a sign of love : but experience proves that the love which is most sincere, is generally the least suspicious. Jealousy more commonly denotes a slight degree of attachment, a silly pride, a constrained sense of little merit, and sometimes a bad heart.

86. Oh, jealousy ! thou most dreadful of all diseases ! the remedies that are employed in thy cure merely serve to increase thy virulence ! Thou poisonest the heart that is pierced by thy sting !

87. It is difficult to blind jealousy, where there is any just cause for suspicion.

88. Woe betide the wretched jealousy that can extract guilt out of the overflowings of an unguarded gaiety.

89. When a woman seems not to fear censure, the world is not so just as to imagine it is not because her actions merit none.

90. Whether we have cause or not, it is a rule among our sex to think ill of women. We persuade ourselves that they are neither faithful nor constant, and on that foundation imagine we owe them neither fidelity nor constancy.

91. Bashfulness and modesty are the surest safeguards of a woman's honesty ; and, therefore, when women are immodest, one will be apt to believe that they are not honest.

92. That affectation of fear, which women of weak minds seem to think the means of rendering them more interesting, will have quite a contrary effect on men of sense.

93. A certain degree of courage must be reckoned in the list of female virtues ; but for a female to be fearless, will be deemed by very few persons an excellence in her character.

94. No rules, not even those of a nunnery, or of a quaker society, can prevent a little coquetry, in that particular where a woman is desirous of being supposed to retain some claim to personal attention.

95. Madame de Stael has often been heard to say, that "she would gladly have exchanged all the brightest qualities of the mind, for that quality which niggard Nature had denied her—the perishable but attractive beauties of the person ;" a sentiment perhaps more discreditable to our sex than to herself.

96. Beauty, however little merit a woman can claim to herself for it, is really a quality which she may reasonably rejoice to possess.

97. The first impression is commonly produced through the medium of the eye ; and this is frequently so powerful as to resist for a long time the opposing evidence of subsequent observation.

98. The ladies often fall into the fatal error of imagining that a fine person is, in our eyes, superior to every other accomplishment ; and those who are so happy as to be endowed with it, rely, with vain confidence, on its irresistible power to retain hearts as well as to subdue them.

99. So far is beauty from being in our eyes an excuse for the want of a cultivated mind, that the beautiful woman has, in reality, a much harder task to perform, than she who is not so distinguished. Even our self-love takes part against them. We feel ashamed of having suffered ourselves to be caught, like children, by mere outside, and perhaps fall into the contrary extreme.

100. A fine woman may dazzle for a time ; but when a man has once thought, " what a pity such a masterpiece should be a walking statue," her empire is at an end. The loveliest woman can hope only for a transitory empire, unless she unite with her beauty the more durable charm of intellectual excellence.

BIBLE OF REASON:

PART III.,

BEING

ADDITIONS TO PART II.;

OR,

SCRIPTURES OF MODERN AUTHORS.

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BIBLE OF REASON.

PART III.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER I. PART II

1.

1. The things that are natural are the things that are eternal in their kinds; nature never dies.

“ When will the stream be aweary of flowing ;
When will the wind be aweary of blowing ;
When will the clouds be aweary of fleeting ;
When will the heart be aweary of beating ;
And nature die ?
Never, oh ! never,—nothing will die.
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleets,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.”

2. The lapse of time has no effect to wear out or destroy the machinery of the universe.

‘ By ceaseless action all that is, subsists ;
Constant rotation of the unwearied wheel :
Its own revolency upholds the world.’

3. The complexional features of the race are fixed and unchangeable: the eternal image of nature cannot possibly be effaced.

4. Change is the universal attribute of nature, *i. e.* the expiration and renewal of every individual: life is but a span that divides the antenatal and posthumous eternities.

“ Individuals die.
Clearly the blue river chimes in its flowing ;
Warmly and broadly the south winds are blowing ;
One after another the white clouds are fleeting ;
Every heart this gay morning in joyance is beating
Full merrily :
Yet all things must die.
The stream will cease to flow,
The wind will cease to blow,
The clouds will cease to fleet,
The heart will cease to beat ;
For all things must die.”

“ The kingdoms of the world have passed away,
And its strong empires mouldered into dust,
Swift as the changes of a poet’s dream ;
And kings, and heroes, and the mighty minds
Whose hopes circled eternity, and seized
The stars as their inheritance, and grew
Too big for mortal frames—until they sank
Into the narrow bounds of nature—or, if left,
Of power, of life, of motion, all bereft !”

5. In nature, production is always equivalent to dissolution. Every species of animal and vegetable possesses unlimited powers of fecundity; the opportunities of exertion are, indeed, restrained; climate, soil, situation may be unfavourable; one stands in the way of another, and the impediments to the increase of one act as hindrances to others. The incessant tendency of the power of reproduction to exert itself seizes every occasion the moment it is presented, and thus, though every individual object has a limited term of existence, infinite nature still constantly teems with life.

6. Vain are all comparisons—vain the power of numbers—to describe the flood of vitality; infinite genera furnish their quotas to the universal existence.

7. The vegetable tribes draw their material from the tributary fossil world, and in their turn afford the same no less necessary aid to animal existence. Nothing in nature remains stationary, inoperative, or useless, and the most inconsiderable agents, in appearance, frequently prove the most irresistible.

8. Amidst all the multifarious motions by which the several processes of generation and corruption, and the other phenomena of nature proceed, we observe, that there are stated methods, which are punctually and constantly adhered to. The same causes, circumstanced in the same manner, produce always the same effects. All the species of animals among us exist according to one general mode; and so do plants also, and even minerals. No new genera are brought forth, or have arisen anywhere; and those that exist are continued by the perpetuating faculties of procreation. Each kind retains strictly its respective link in the eternal chain of being.

9. The species of plants appear, as far as can be ascertained from the universal experience of those who are conversant with them, as well as from every account that can be gathered from the records of remote antiquity, to remain distinct from each other, marked by their appropriate characters and qualities, and renewing themselves periodically by sexual procreation. Such being the case with all the plants of which we have any knowledge, we conclude it to be so with the rest, as well as with animals. The *white* blackbird of Aristotle still inhabits the Cyllenian groves and the copses of Arcadia, undisturbed by the revolutions of two thousand years; and the banks of the Alpheus have been fringed by the same violets and primroses, through uncounted ages, as those with which they are now, every spring, adorned.

10. Various plants, indeed, and especially domestic ones, like domestic animals, are found liable to some variations of colour luxuriance, and sensible qualities; such has been the effect of circumstances in changing the character of certain animals and vegetables, that some might, with a latitude of expression, be said to be created by the art of man, so remote is their identity with the kinds from which they were derived; which variations have led to doubts whether any species were certainly permanent. These doubts could only arise from

a slight view of the subject. Whatever casual aberrations there may be in the seminal offspring of cultivated plants, a little observation will prove how transient such varieties are, and how uniformly their descendants, if they be capable of producing any, resume the natural characters of the species to which they belong. Their artificial existence merely proves that every thing but sexual propagation is only the extension of an individual whose corporeal frame has but a certain limited existence, and the period longer in some varieties than in others. Domestic animals when left to themselves, have also a great tendency towards the organization of those of the same species in the wild state, and a very short time only is necessary to produce that transformation. Those mis-shapen productions called *monstrous births*, would, under circumstances of generic reproduction, be nature's genuine issue.

11. The uniformity of the order of nature is an axiom which every philosophic mind is bound to admit before he can investigate the causes of any one natural phenomenon—before he can draw a single rational conclusion.

12. The relation between cause and effect is a demonstrated truth ; hence it follows, that the infinite universe exists of necessity, and not by the will, appointment, or ordination of a *first* great cause.

13. Uniform repetition is all the idea we can have of necessity.

14. The discoveries of astronomy have exhibited the insignificance of our earth—a mere atom. Our minute planet forms but a petty object in the system to which it belongs, and that system may form as diminutive a portion of the department of some still larger finite division of natural organization, severally subject to the same general constitution, and related to, or connected with, though bearing no proportion in extent to the universe of similar modes of being, which because it is infinite, admits no comprehended sphere to bear a ratio in space.

15. The bigoted theologian insists that the globe, with all its variety of minerals, its strata full of bones, shells, impressions, and even fæces of animals, was created by the *fiat* of a divine Nothing a few centuries ago.

16. The geologist, like the astronomer, is called upon to trace the operation of forces, not only vast beyond conception in themselves, but acquiring infinite augmentation of effect from the numberless ages during which they have been unremittingly exerted ; and the problem, to explain the condition of the earth's surface at any moment of the eternal career, is complicated, as much as any other in physics, from the nature of the agents, of which change and vicissitude appear to be essential characteristics. The degradation of surface by the atmosphere, the erosion of streams and torrents, the encroachments of the sea, the growth and decay of the animal and vegetable tribes that successively inhabit the globe, with all the chemical and mechanical processes going on around us,—though constantly in progress, are forever severally varying in the degree of their local activity. The great

phenomena of volcanic agency, which seems, as it were, to constitute one of the vital powers of the earth, are by their very nature, transitory and erratic. Viewed, nevertheless, in relation to the vast periods of time during which phenomena of the same kind have been continually recurring, these very accidents and apparent irregularities acquire a sort of uniformity: they intimate the repetition of results in future resembling those which have already repeatedly occurred in the modification of the globe.

17. Prodigious alterations in physical geography, and apparent revolutions affecting the surface of the globe, may be rationally accounted for, not only by existing causes, but by some so trifling, as at first sight to appear incapable of producing any but equally trifling effects, and should put us still more on our guard against the tendency to invent extraordinary causes for such renovations.

18. The production of the mineral masses composing the substance of the earth, and the several changes which appear to occur in them and in organic life, are to be attributed to the operation of natural causes that still continue to effect similar mineral deposits.

19. There are no traces of any beginning to this series of changes and productions, or of any variation in the ratio of its progress as regards the aggregate; but on the contrary, the existing causes of change have apparently operated eternally with absolute uniformity.

20. In the factory of nature, processes are now in operation by which mineral masses, bearing an analogy to those already in existence, are duly elaborated.

21. The process of air combining with solids, or oxydation, is also constantly decomposing the mineral masses that exist.

22. The time required for apparently trifling causes, to operate changes of such magnitude, is as nothing in the calender of nature, however great it may appear when measured by the standard of human chronicles.

23. Of the several agents which contribute to geologic changes, water has the widest sphere of activity.

24. The disruptive force of subterranean energy counteracts the aqueous tendency to reduce the mineral parts of the earth to a level; and thus inequalities are maintained in the relief of the solid surface. The aqueous and the igneous agents of change are incessantly tending to effect irregularities.

25. The action of running waters and the descent of rain constitute agents of superficial erosion, and possess no insignificant force for transporting the friable materials of one district into distant quarters: the drift there deposited to await still further changes.

26. The works of excavation and accumulation are also carried on by marine currents.

27. Lightning also co-operates with the violence of the ocean in shattering solid rocks and heaping them in piles of enormous fragments both on dry land and beneath the water.

28. Icebergs, many of them containing strata of earth and stone,

or loaded with beds of rock of great thickness, are also active instruments in the transportation of gravel and rocks from the mountainous shores, against which they form in high latitudes, to the distant seas and shores where the ice is dissolved.

29. The physical influence of the human race must not be underrated in accomplishing changes, by stripping the earth of its forests, controlling the direction of the rivers, quarrying mountains, draining lakes, subduing, in short, the whole surface of the land and marshalling the powers of nature to administer to human wants.

30. A small bay, or inlet of the sea, is first cut off from the great body of water by a sand bank which the action of the waves has thrown up, and thus it becomes a detached lagoon; the sun evaporating the inclosed water, and plants springing up in the mud, the lagoon by degrees becomes a marsh. As the process of evaporation proceeds, the mud assuming greater consistency, vegetation becomes more active, rank jungles are formed, trees spring up, and at length man finds the soil firm enough for his footsteps.

31. Masses of the hardest rocks are reduced to powder, and the sand, after shifting about, combines at length with minerals of synthetic quality, and becomes consolidated again. Thus, look where we will, the constant transition of natural objects is sufficiently obvious.

32. Many who behold the spoils of the land heaped in successive strata, and blended confusedly with the remains of fishes or interspersed with shells and corals, imagine that they are reading in such phenomena the proofs of chaotic disorder and reiterated catastrophes, instead of indications of a surface as habitable as the most fertile districts now tenanted by man. They are not content with disregarding the analogy of the present course of nature, when they speculate on the revolutions of past times, but they draw conclusions concerning the former state of the earth directly the reverse of those to which a fair induction from facts would infallibly lead them.

33. From the evidence of organic fossils alone, exclusive of other cumulative proofs, no doubt can rationally be entertained that innumerable generations and extinctions of individuals must have been in succession during infinite ages, rather than comprehended in the scanty limit of sixty hundred years. It must be evident to unbiassed minds that successive strata, containing in regular order of superposition, distinct beds of shells and corals arranged in families as they grow at the bottom of the sea, could only have been formed by slow and insensible degrees during the inconceivable lapse of ages.

34. Occasional alternations and admixtures of fluvatile and marine deposits must be expected in some situations. Some of the strata of marine formations are much more recent than others; while in the midst of even the oldest strata of this kind, other strata appear full of animal or vegetable remains of *land* or *fresh water* productions.

35. It is not possible to reconcile the formation of those myriads of organic remains that are embedded many thousand feet in limestone rocks, and which attest the existence of countless ages, with the

recent period assigned as the era to which the *divine* historian refers the creation of man.

36. Intolerant theologians, adhering with pertinacity to their own divine fables, fulminate anathemas against all those who find natural proofs that the universe was not called suddenly into existence by a single fiat, and when enquiries into the changes which our earth has undergone lead with infallible evidence to the truth of its material existence at a period incalculably remote—yes, that in some position or other, it has eternally performed its part in the infinite system.

37. There is no particular stratum identified with a supposed period of man's first appearance, and no proofs that the human race has not existed eternally.

38. Those who comprehend the operations by which the formation of rocky strata is accomplished will not be surprised that the fossil remains of the human organization are so seldom found embedded therein. Man's remains usually find their grave in the consuming oxyds of the earth's inhabited surface.

39. The theory of the progressive developement of organic life has been refuted, and the certainty of the eternity determined, by discoveries of fossil shapes belonging to different genera in the higher orders of the class mammalia embedded in the most ancient strata.

40. Those who fancy to themselves a great internal fire maintained by actual combustion, are as irrational as those who seek, in the existing order of things, precipitation from some liquid menstruum.

41. The depositions of strata have not been simultaneous, but successive ; and their causes have been so too.

42. There was no deluge produced by a vindictive miracle in consequence of a Jewish God's anger towards mankind.

43. How uncalled for, then, are the general catastrophes and revolutions resorted to by cosmogonists to account for the tombing of successive generations of animals in the older strata, when the same process is obviously going on at present amidst the general tranquillity and order that reigns throughout the richest and most populous countries.

44. In future periods, new scenes of havoc and ruin may compare with any now found on the surface of our continents ; raised, as they all have been in former ages, from the bosom of the deep, and formed by the very same processes by which future scenery will exist.

45. The constant progress of animated existence, ever varied, but ever adapted to the circumstances which attend it ; all the combinations whether of the organic, or mineral world ; are indications of uniform, invariable, processes—connecting the peak of the mountain and the bottom of the ocean in one chain of mutual dependence subservient to the existence and abundance of life and enjoyment.

“ Where’s the mastery of mind
Trammelless and unconfined,
Probing nature’s boundless scheme,
Gauging the stupendous theme ?”

1. Where is the man that has broken loose from all the shackles that in his youth had been imposed upon him, and who says to Truth —“ Go on ; whithersoever thou leadest, I am prepared to follow.”

2. Ignorance would establish its own horizon for the limits of truth, but philosophy knows that there is a universe beyond it.

3. The Universe—that which exists infinitely—remains always the same : but the several combinations and circumstances in the formation of individual parts of the general system, are liable to variation, and are subject to such perpetual change and reciprocity, as keep up a constant circulation of active agency. It is the perpetual condition, that every individual thing derives the materials that sustain its being, and that give to it all its qualities, from other things with which its system is in contact.

4. The passive modes of being called material, are compound in their nature ; the substance of each one enters into the constitution of the others, all varieties and diversities being but varied combinations. Every thing about us, within and without us, is in perpetual motion : and these motions and changes display the most perfect regularity and harmony, and lead to an unchanging uniformity of results : nature is a perpetual circulation of actions—the same infinite substance involved in an infinite variety of modes or motions.

5. In the natural process, every cause is an effect, and every effect becomes a cause : this is the eternal condition, and by these alternations of cause and effect, the infinite phenomena involved in universal being have been accomplished and are sustained. It is not possible that there can be any such thing as a simple *cause* of any consequence.

6. Every thing that exists, every thing that has entity, must have a material of its being, and, therefore, there can be no distinction among existing things, except those of mode and shape.

7. It is impossible to conceive of properties or powers except as being the attributes of something that exists,—and that involves the ideas of existence and materiality : immateriality and nonentity are convertible terms.

8. In nature, we find the chain of relation and adaptation unbroken, impassible, perpetual. Here and there, the present imperfection of science may render us unable to detect some link ; but attempt to touch, with a view to rend it, and reason sustains an instantaneous and admonitory shock. Perceptions of this nature, in one shape or another, will find their way into the dullest and even the most sordid of mankind ; but, with those who feel and habitually observe the harmonies of the universal modes, what varied, and refined, and elevated sentiments, are they not calculated to inspire !

9. A certain class of persons will raise an outcry about *materialism*; but that man is a fool who is frightened by the "*bugbear*" of a word; and until the unmeaning terms of "*Theology*" be discarded, truth will never be discovered.

10. If we discard vulgar opinion, many deeply rooted prejudices, and all assumed metaphysical fiction, we shall find that "*Theology*" rests upon a basis of unmeaning words.

11. *Theology* consists in certain dogmas preached by priests, which will be found to rest upon assumed principles that cannot possibly have any foundation in reality, and that involve consequences from the admission of which every sensible man will shrink; and if we are to attain to a knowledge of the truth, it will be necessary to read the writings collected together, and called the "Holy Bible", with as little reference to, or respect for, the opinions commonly received among men, as it has been so, to examine the discoveries of the book of nature.

12. In studying the facts which have been developed by investigations concerning the nature of that system in the midst of which man lives, "*Theology*" must be discarded, and "*Religion*" must fall; but the fall of *Theology* and *Religion* will be the resurrection of mankind from mental death.

13. Every thing disorganizes, nothing perishes. Generation, death, concretion, and solution, in animal, vegetable, and mineral—in solid and in fluid,—go on in perpetual revolution; but nothing is annihilated; the universal constituent is imperishable, although the aggregate identities change. Mutation is every where, material extinction no where. The researches of science, the analyses of experimental philosophy, the extended familiarity with the processes and phenomena of the world—nay, the every-day experience of our ordinary senses, all, all, affirm the fact of the eternity of nature's substance.

14. Nothing can be more incorrect than to speak of "*matter*" as "*inert*." Because we do not see particles and fragments wheeling about or stalking around us; because we do not see one body rising up and moving toward its neighbour, we content ourselves with regarding them as composed of inert materials; while we neglect the movements of matter in every chemical change—the marching of particles in chrystallizations seeking light—and the strides of masses in their revolutions through space.

15. Nature is never old, nor middle-aged, nor young; but, in a condition of "changeable constancy," it moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression: an eternal universe composed of transitory parts.

16. Processes of waste, decay, separation, and combination, result from continued natural action. Renewed formations consist of the very substances of prior formations.

17. That which exists is displayed in the passive combinations called *matter*; the clods of the valley, a mass of rock, or a grain of sand, alike display the same basis; we also see it brought into an

almost infinite variety of forms in the organizations of vegetable and animal life, and there exhibiting a vast diversity of characters and relative properties. Every compound becomes what it is from the necessity of its nature; and so it is also in respect of active agencies; the electric fluid, light, heat, thought, &c. exhibit the properties which obviously rise from peculiarities inseparable from the bodies that occasion them. Every individual structure is a separate display of the properties and attributes of that which exists—and, independently of the combinations perceivable, there is no “matter.”

18. It is impossible not to perceive that the two steps of the same progression, are dissolution and re-organization; and as, in the series of great natural vicissitudes of the earth's consistency, we see neither beginning nor end,—so also, in every other particular of the economy of the world—in the continuation of the different genera of animals, vegetables, and minerals, and in the general mode of astronomical movements,—no mark either of commencement or termination of the existing order of the Universe can possibly be detected.

19. If we look closely into the history of any class of natural phenomena, we shall find that it is subject to the condition of infinite variety and diversification which pervades the universe; fossils, plants, animals, are all diversified in their orders, genera, species, and *lusus*.

20. Nothing is exempt from the general order. Among the loftiest mountains and the hardest rocks—in the objects that appear most durable and fixed—the characters of revolution are most deeply imprinted.

21. In the course of the last half century, geology has begun to partake of the certainty of an experimental science. Observations of all kinds have been accumulated, and the geologist instead of referring to the darkness of a “primitive chaos,” and “travelling out of nature” in search of knowledge, now confines himself to the consideration of observed facts, and traces out their consequences by the rules of inductive reasoning.

22. The general changes of the earth appear to arise from astronomical causes, the progression of the line of Apsides and the diminution of the obliquity; and local changes arise from rivers, rains, and tides; from accumulated vegetation; from decompositions, volcanoes, and earthquakes.

23. When we are unable to explain the monuments of past changes, it is always more probable that the difficulty arises from our ignorance of the agencies, or their possible effects, in an indefinite lapse of time, than that some cause was formerly in operation which has ceased to act; and if, in any part of the globe, the energy of a cause appears to have decreased, it is always probable the diminution of intensity in its action is merely local, and that its force is unimpaired when the whole globe is considered.

24. Patient analysis, philosophical discovery, have now taught us that it is by insensible gradations the great geological operations are carried on.

25. We can only infer the past history of our globe from our knowledge of the powers which are now in operation; and alluvial deposits must be regarded as the proper index to guide our conclusions respecting the origin of analogous but more ancient strata. By the cursory observer, storms, torrents, and inundations, are regarded in no other light than as the agents of ruin and desolation; whereas, if their effects be duly examined, they will be found to be the very processes by which the most barren rocks and inaccessible mountains are eventually converted into scenes of fruitfulness, beauty, and animation.

26. Also, by the force of one element breaking loose upon the rest, all the varieties of nature there existing, all the master-pieces of art, all the labours of man, are reduced to nought; all that was admired as great and magnificent is obliterated or vanished,—while another variety and face of things overspreads the surface. Where are now the former empires of the earth? their imperial cities, their palaces, their temples, and their monuments of glory? Who can tell where they stood, or describe the conqueror's fame?

27. Civilization has been gained, lost, gained again. Religions, languages, governments, usages of private life, and modes of thinking,—all have undergone a succession of revolutions. Every thing has passed away; but the vast features of nature are alone unchangeable.

28. The period of tranquillity in which we live, will be disturbed in its turn by new dislocations of the land we inhabit, and of which earthquakes teach us the foundations are not immovable.

29. The calculations which it has been attempted to found on the *talus* of debris, with the view of inferring “the age of the world,” has never probably been done in earnest by any practical geologist.

30. The succession of different races of animals imbedded in the materials of our earth, contains evidence of changes and revolutions—incursions and retreats of the sea, changes in the forms and elevations of continents, dislocations and ruptures of large portions of the surface of the globe; but, in the dislocation of territories, in the elevation of hills, in the comminution and dispersion of vast tracts of the hardest rocks, in the obliteration and renewal of an entire consistency, we have no reason to infer the manifestation of forces more energetic and extensive than those which belong to the common course of every-day nature; nor to conceive that, whatever might have been the causes which had been at work in former ages, their fury was now spent, their task performed, their “occupation gone;” we have no warrant to speak of a breach in the continuity of nature's operations,—of the present state of things as permanent and tranquil, and of the past as having been progressive and violent. The state of things which preceded that under which we live and geologize, is strictly and universally interwoven with the existing condition.

31. All our stratified rocks have been consolidated and converted into stone from the loose materials collected or thrown together by natural agencies; and to the force of these agencies must it also be

attributed that so many strata, instead of being horizontal as when they were formed, are now found possessing all degrees of elevation, and some of them even perpendicular to the horizon; and that strata which were once at the bottom of the sea are now many of them several thousand feet above its surface.

32. Those sedimentary beds which are frequently observed in mountainous countries, either inclined at considerable angles, placed vertically, or even thrown over, were not formed in that position, but are so circumstanced in consequence of the decomposition of strata on which they had rested; and the mountains, instead of having been elevated or raised up, owe their station to the durability of their consistency, which has not been affected by the agencies that had removed the materials in their vicinity.

33. There can be no doubt that the strata which now compose our continents, are all formed out of the materials of previously existing strata.

34. That portions of the earth's substance have occupied many successive elevations and depressions, in relation to the level of the sea, can be refused acknowledgment, only owing to the prejudice of systematic and "religious" opinions.

35. None know better than men of natural science how to understand the term "*religious*" wherever they meet with it.

36. The influence of age, *i. e.*, the continued atmospheric effect, in decaying the most solid and durable substances, is well known. Frost also is a powerful agent in producing the disintegration of rocky strata. Granite resists the weather for ages, but in the end its comminution readily furnishes an abundant vegetable soil. Basalt, too, is occasionally of the most obdurate description, though, in general, it is copiously converted into one of our most fertile earths.

37. The reader will judge whether those who assert, or those who believe in "*the marvellous property of the peculiar and exclusive consistency of the order of geological formation,*" with the mosaic story of the "*creation,*" are most worthy of marvel.

38. The partizans of "the deluge" have been defied to show any thing else, in all their pretended deluvium throughout Europe and the other quarters of the globe, and which, according to their ideas, ought to be characterized by the universal existence of *marine* fossils, than that such fossils are only to be found in alluvia that had been formed on the sea-shore; elsewhere, are observed only debris of land and river shells, and bones of terrestrial animals.

39. We may believe in local cataclysms, of great lakes of fresh and also probably of salt-water, but there is absolutely nothing that can justify belief in a general cataclysm, or "Deluge."

3.

1. It is now 217 years since the dungeon gates of the inquisition closed upon Galileo, and if we may judge by the vials of theological wrath from time to time poured out upon the heads of geologists, the world has not grown much wiser since. The harmony of *physics* and "*divinity*" would seem as important and as strongly insisted on as before superstition veiled to truth. Astronomy has had her system-makers who constructed untenable hypotheses, to force natural phenomena to agree with "holy writ;" and the sister science has not been wanting in votaries who would make the first chapter of "Genesis" her procrustean bed. Yet those to whose peculiar province such inquiries belong, are not themselves all agreed upon the authenticity of those same chapters. Some "divines," and learned men too, hold the "*inspired*" portion of the Old Testament to commence with the "call of Abraham."

2. The science of geology has hitherto been cultivated almost entirely by those who, while they cherished a reverential regard for the "authority of the sacred scriptures," overlooked those methods of investigation which lead to a discovery of the processes of nature. The surface of the earth was solely looked at for "proofs of the effects of the deluge." In their efforts to reconcile geology with "revelation," the "place of descent" where the "ark" rested had long been regarded as determined; remains of the timber had been preserved, and many pieces of the pitch with which it was fabled to have been caulked had been furnished to be employed as amulets for averting evils. The skeletons of the "antediluvian inhabitants" were eagerly sought after, and even the grinders and thigh-bones of the antediluvian giants were disinterred.

3. Those writers who mingled "scriptural history" with their speculative or ideal geology, and weakly fancied that they maintained the "authority of the scriptures" by seeking for "traces of the deluge" in all the appearances of the earth, and warping into accordance with the "Mosaic accounts of the creation and watery destruction," their own scanty and inaccurate notions of the structure of the earth, appear to have forgotten the danger which attended their presumptuous attempts; since the fall of their opinions (and one after another they have all fallen away) has successively been attended by the fall of "scriptural authority."

4. As science advanced, these theories of the "deluge" appeared in their true light, as inconsistent with the phenomena of nature. The skeleton of the "antediluvian man" became that of an acknowledged reptile, while the grinders and thigh-bones of the giants were admitted to belong to elephants. The "pious" geologist beheld his theories vanish like a dream, and the admirer of "revelation" felt that the "pillar of his faith" had become a broken reed. Geology was now viewed by the "Christian" with suspicion. The revelationist had begun to consider the "history of the deluge" as the

least perfect of the "sacred records," since *no proofs could be found in nature to attest the occurrence of the catastrophe.*

5. It is not surprising that an attempt to revive these hopes should meet with a credulous welcome from the "religious public." The "Reverend" William Buckland appears to have embraced Baron Cuvier's views respecting the "deluge" and, under their influence, he distributes the modern strata, except the volcanic, into "diluvian" and "post-diluvian" *detritus*. The "*Reliquiæ deluvianæ*" has contributed together with Cuvier's "Theory of the Earth" again to bring the science into the favour of "the church." The general reader was likely to be charmed with the scenes which were disclosed, while the "Christian" hailed with joy the offering of so valuable a testimony to "the authority of revelation." Those who hesitated to yield their conviction to the doctrines of the diluvianists were denounced as embracing "*the infidel side of the question*," assuming the use of this phrase as a fallacy, while the only true infidelity could be that towards truth, the prevalence of error, the misrepresentation of nature.

6. No opinion can be heretical but that which is not true. Truths can never war against each other. We have, therefore, nothing to fear from the result of our inquiries, provided they be followed in the secure road of honest induction. In this way we may rest assured we shall never arrive at conclusions opposed to any truth either physical or moral, from whatever source that truth may be derived; nay, rather, that new discoveries will ever lend support and illustration to things which are already known, by giving us an extended insight into the universal harmonies of nature.

7. Swainson says, "The views of Cuvier I have always considered as erroneous. Professor Buckland's zeal for a favourite vision led to a reply of mine (*Edin. Phil. Jo. Ap.* 1826) which my friends assure me gave the death-blow to the doctrine of the deluge. Certain, at least, it is, that, with the exception of a very few individuals who may still be found on stilts, amidst the 'retiring waters,' the opponents of the hypothesis have become as numerous as were formerly its supporters, and the period probably is not far distant when the '*Reliquiæ deluvianæ*' will be quoted as an example of the *idola specus*."

8. "With respect to the doctrine of the universality of the Mosaic deluge," says Professor Daubeney, "since divines themselves are divided upon it, laymen may surely be allowed a certain latitude of opinion, and it has always appeared to me that the phenomena to which the deluvianists appeal in proof of the reality of the 'event' alluded to, may be just as well explained by a number of partial though extensive floods as by a single universal one. I am quite prepared to admit that the accounting for all the phenomena exhibited on the earth's surface, not only consistently with the present laws of nature, (for on that point I suppose we are all agreed,) but also without having recourse to any operations but those we are eye-

witnesses of, constitutes in a manner the *beau ideal* at which our researches should aim, and would, if successful, elevate geology to the rank of the exact sciences."

9. Even Professor Sedgwick admits, that there exist no physical monuments as the intelligible records of the great "*deluvian catastrophe*."

10. Linnæus gave offence to the "revelationists" by his declaration that he saw no examples in nature of the ravages of an universal flood. The diluvian hypothesis is found to be disproved by the truths of geology and the truths of phytology, and not the least faith can be placed by a naturalist in the diluvian creeds of Baron Cuvier and Professor Buckland.

11. Although the views of Buffon on the theory of the earth can no longer be defended in detail, he will always have the merit of having made it generally felt that the present state of the earth is the result of a series of changes which it is possible to trace, and of having pointed out the phenomena which indicate the course of those changes.

12. The opinion promulgated by Hutton "that the strata called *primitive* were mere altered sedimentary rocks," was vehemently opposed,—the main objection to the theory being its affirmed tendency to promote a belief in the past *eternity* of the material of our planets. Previously, the absence of apparent animal and vegetable remains in the so-called primitive strata, had been appealed to as proving that there had been a period when the world was uninhabited by living beings. The doctrine that the oldest visible strata might be the monuments of an antecedent period when the animate world was already in existence, was declared to be equivalent to the doctrine *that there never* was a beginning to the present order of nature.

13. The earlier geologists employed themselves in conjecturing what might have been the course of nature at a remote period, rather than in the investigation of what was the course of nature in their own times. Never was there a dogma more calculated to foster indolence and to blunt the keen edge of curiosity, than this assumption of discordance between the former and the existing causes of change. The modern course is directly opposed to those theoretical views, and consists in an earnest and patient endeavour to reconcile the former indications of change with the evidences of gradual mutations now in progress.

14. The former mode, that of speculating on a former distinct state of things, has led invariably to a multitude of contradictory systems, which have been overthrown one after another, which have been found quite incapable of modification, and which are often required to be precisely reversed. We have been told of general catastrophes and of deluges, of the alternation of periods of repose and disorder, of the refrigeration of the globe, of the sudden annihilation of whole races of animals and plants, and other hypotheses equally false.

15. The other method, that of restricting ourselves to the known or possible operations of existing causes, has put geologists on the road that leads to truth, suggesting views which have been found capable of improvement until at last adopted by universal consent.

16. Supposing the vast canopy of air could at once discharge its whole watery store, this precipitate would form a sheet of scarcely five inches thick over the surface of the globe. During the course of a year, our atmosphere must therefore deposit five or even ten times all the moisture it held in solution. To explain the actual phenomena it is hence requisite that this restless medium should change unceasingly from a state of dryness to humidity. Such alternations are effected by the natural process of the winds which sweep variously over the land and the ocean.

17. The most far-fetched and improbable causes have been advanced in support of the Bible-fable, and to destroy that most beautiful and rational theory—that the earth has undergone many and gradual revolutions, in some places the sea covering what had been dry land, and in others the earth being uncovered where the waters had inundated it; whereby the climate, soil, and productions of different localities have been changed: hence we find organic remains of beings no longer living in the spots where they are found, because the climate and soil are unfitted to maintain them as they were formerly maintained.

18. Our inability to account for the atmospheric and other latent causes, which often give rise to the most destructive epidemics, prove the extent of our ignorance of the entire assemblage of conditions requisite for the existence of any one species on the globe.

19. The natural process is that of reproduction, by which individual beings are incessantly generated, similar to the parents from which they originate; so that the individuals belonging to the same animal or vegetable species are known to be descended from parents similar to them and differing from all others.

20. The general fact of individuals being presumed to belong to the same species as soon as they can be brought together under some definite agreement, will easily find its application as well in the unorganized as in the organized objects of the world.

21. Although but a small number of the living species of animals may have been in being at that period when seas or lakes were inhabited by a few only of the existing species of testacea, there are ample grounds for inferring that all the great classes of the animal kingdom, such as they now exist, were then fully represented.

22. Every animal is so perfectly transmitted from the parent to the offspring, that the lapse of ages does not disturb the harmony of our grouping. In all essential points of structure the genus is constantly preserved entire. The genus *homo*, or the human species, is transmitted in our day, precisely in the same undeviating form as we recognize it in the earliest ages. The lion and the tiger have the same

external form as delineated anciently, and their skeletons exactly resemble those imbedded in the crust of the earth.

23. The size of the human race has not sensibly diminished. Not only from the concurrence of so many kinds of proofs as are derivable from historical evidence, from the earliest known periods, but from considerations of science, in the absence of all monuments, it may be inferred that there has been no material change in mankind.

34. Leudovicus Vives says,—“neither were the ancients giants, nor are we dwarfs, but all of us men of the same standard.”

25. That the state of our planet is any thing but stable, it seems to be the most perfect delusion to doubt, although much time must be conceived to elapse before any very important changes can be effected upon its surface. The process of physical revolution is slow but certain, and, indeed, so obvious to geological observers, that the modern system of referring the former changes of the globe to the causes now in daily action upon it, or of assuming the perpetual continuance of phenomena affecting the mutations of the earth's crust, must be admitted to afford the simplest and most rational explanation of matters formerly the objects of theoretical speculation. Former states of the earth, not being usually considered as capable of explanation from causes now in operation, have been left more to conjecture than those solid proofs which we recognize by an appeal to modern phenomena. Signs of disturbance are now to be seen where the earth has long been a state of repose; and it is interesting as well as useful to trace those vestiges of demolition and reconstruction which are so generally visible. The alluvial matters remaining after the retreat of the waters become the seats of vegetation, of cultivation, and social life.

26. Are there not conservative processes in nature to repair the mighty ravages of the vastest destructive agency? the forces of degradation very often of themselves produce their own limitation, the mountain-torrent may tear up the solid rock and bear its fragments to the plain below, and there deposited subject to new action of material elements. And what is true of a single rock is true of a mountain-chain; and vast regions on the surface of the earth, now only monuments of spoliation and waste, may hereafter, under the effect of a thick vegetable covering, become a new scene of life and animation.

27. By the processes of vegetable life, an incalculable mass of solid matter is absorbed year after year from the elastic and non-elastic fluids circulating round the earth, and is thus added to the solid surface. This simple operation goes a vast way towards counterpoising all the agents of destruction: thus, in the great conservative operations, the elements are made to return into themselves.

28. Every one knows how largely the idea of floods and cataclysms enters into the speculation of the geologist. If the streamlets of the European Continent afford illustrations of the formation of strata, how much more must the MISSISSIPPI, with its ever shifting sand-banks, its crumbling shores, its enormous masses of drift-timber—the source

of future beds of coal—its extensive and varied alluvial deposits, and its mighty mass of waters, rolling sullenly along like the flood of eternity.

29. Reviewing the history of earthquakes and volcanoes, derived from the records of catastrophes attending them, and the geological evidences and illustrations afforded by modern science, we may conclude that these causes, so often the sources of death and terror, which visit in succession every zone and leave behind them monuments of ruin and disorder, are, nevertheless, a *conservative* process essential to the stability of the system.

30. The instances of disruption exhibited in many upland coombs and valleys may be referred to local subsidences which may in many cases have been in great measure occasioned by the undermining effects of springs acting upon the pyritiferous and decomposing beds of *lias*.

31. The science of the mode in which the extraordinary revolutions in the state of the earth's surface, of alterations in its form, its climates, whether effected by elevations of the land itself, or by subsidence in the level of the sea, constitutes the most interesting study in geology. The evidence of great and frequent movements, occasioned both by protrusions and subsidences, is so various and strong, and every day so much extended by inquiry, as almost to demonstrate that these have been the causes by which these great revolutions were effected; and that, although the action of the forces has varied greatly in different countries and at different periods, they are now, and ever have been, incessantly at work in operating present changes, and preparing the way for future alteration in the exterior of the globe. The results of modern inquiries are not like the visions of the old cosmogonists, the creations of fancy, but sound and legitimate consequences, flowing naturally and inevitably from the plainest evidence,—from facts obtained with great labour and scrupulously weighed.

32. Those geologists who shrink from the theory, that all the compact and crystalline strata have once been in the state of the ordinary mud, clay, marl, sand, gravel, lime-stone, and other deposits now forming beneath the waters, resort, in their desire to escape from such conclusions, to the hypothesis, that *chemical causes* "once" acted with intense energy, and that by their agency more crystalline strata were precipitated; but this theory appears as mysterious and unphilosophical as the doctrine of a "*plastic virtue*," introduced by the earlier writers to explain the origin of fossil shells and bones.

33. The regular order of arrangement in the mineral series throughout certain districts, led the earlier geologists into a belief that they should be able to fix a definite order of succession for the various members of this great class throughout the world, but that expectation has not been realized, and the notion of an uniform order of succession in the different groups must be abandoned.

34. There have been discovered, in many districts, certain members of the so-called "primitive" series, either alternating with, or passing by intermediate gradations into, rocks of a decidedly mechanical origin, containing traces of organic remains. Instead of forming in all cases the oldest part of the earth's crust, or of that portion of the exterior of our planet accessible to observation, as had been supposed, the granites are often found to be of comparatively recent origin, sometimes newer than the stratified rocks which cover them. These "primary" strata have assumed their crystalline structure at many successive periods, and their difference of mineral composition may be attributed, not to an original difference of the conditions under which they were deposited at the surface, but to subsequent modifications superinduced by the ordinary temperature of location underneath subsequent depositions, and which temperature though but of moderate degree, yet by subjection to it for a sufficiently durable period, has produced the perceived fusion into known crystallized precipitates.

35. The nomenclature of geology, in reference to the so-called "primary" rocks, is not only imperfect, but founded also on a false theory; inasmuch as some granitic formations are of origin posterior to many "secondary" rocks. Some "*primary*" formations can be shown to be newer than many "*secondary*" groups—a manifest contradiction in terms.

36. All stratified rocks must have been deposited originally at the surface, or on those parts of the surface of the globe which were covered with water; but they could never have acquired their crystalline texture, unless acted on by temperature under pressure at those depths, and under circumstances where the "Plutonic" rocks are generated.

37. As we go deeper into the geological series, we find that they have all, to a greater or less extent, acquired a crystalline structure; and rocks, now in a mechanical state, are ever tending to pass more and more into the crystalline.

38. It may be said, that, in order to such a process as the change of mechanical into crystalline strata, heat is necessary; but is there not heat enough in every stratum as it exists at present to effect this transition, if time be applied?

39. In the crystallizing processes, all traces of shells and other organic remains may be destroyed, and new chemical combinations may arise, without the masses being so fused as that the line of stratification should be wholly obliterated. Granular marble has probably originated in the form of ordinary limestone, having in many instances been replete with shells and corals now obliterated.

40. Just as we find beds of coal in sedimentary formations, we meet with anthracite associated with the rocks termed "primary;" and we know that in the vicinity of some trap dikes, coal is converted into anthracite.

41. How many thin, leaf-like seams of matter, each containing

the remains of myriads of testacea and plants, frequently enter into the composition of a single stratum; and how great a succession of these strata must unite to form a single group.

42. Continents and mountain-chains, colossal as are their dimensions, are nothing more than an assemblage of such igneous and aqueous groups, formed in succession during an infinite lapse of ages, and superimposed upon each other. The geologist counts his time, not by celestial cycles, but by an index he has found in the solid frame-work of the globe itself. He sees a long succession of monuments, each of which may have required millions of ages for its elaboration.

43. Confined notions in regard to the quantity of past time have tended more than any other prepossessions to retard the progress of sound theoretical views, the inadequacy of conception regarding the earth's antiquity having cramped the freedom of speculation in the science of geology, very much as a belief in the existence of a vaulted firmament once retarded the progress of astronomy. It was not until Descartes assumed the indefinite extent of space, and removed the supposed boundaries of the universe, that just opinions began to be entertained of the relative distances of the celestial bodies; and until we habituated ourselves to contemplate the possibility of an indefinite lapse of ages having been comprised within each of the more modern periods of the history of strata, we were in danger of forming most erroneous and partial geologic views.

44. If we take the experience of changes on the earth's surface on record as our measure, we shall find that we can do no more than rest upon some general expression of undefined magnitude of duration.

45. *Great and small, long and short*, have no meaning except in reference to us and our conceptions.

46. Our system occupies relatively to ourselves an immense portion of space, and yet it is but one small compartment of the indescribable universe. Immense as is an area of 5000 millions of miles, yet it is but a minute section of the incomprehensible infinite—that infinite which forbids its parts being brought into comparison with it.

47. As Biot says, “the earth appears a mere grain of sand when compared to the sun, which again, in its turn, is but a point in infinite space.”

48. The earth is an atom in comparison with the visible sphere; all we can behold is but an atom in comparison of that which is unseen; and all of seen and unseen which calculation can include—all that is finite—is not possible to be set in any proportion with the universe; and the meanest combinations of material things submitted to our senses propagate their influence through interminable space co-infinite with gravitation, and perform their part in keeping up the stability of the universe.

49. All we now see around us is only the existing link in the infinite chain of phenomena arising out of an uniform order of

causation of which we can trace no beginning, and of which we see no prospect of end.

50. The astronomical bodies of our system leave behind them no marks to track their progress through their orbits; and the vast secular periods we can calculate reach to ages long anterior to the records we possess. In the phenomena of geology we are carried back, almost at our first step, into times unlimited by any narrow measures of our own; and we find exhibited and arranged the monuments of former revolutions, requiring for their accomplishment perhaps all the secular periods of astronomy. Nor is this all. It is shown, by records not to be misinterpreted, that during the vast lapse of time, in the very contemplation of which our minds become bewildered, the property of gravitation underwent no change, and the powers of generic combination were still performing their office.

51. Assuming that the instrument he used could enable him to penetrate 497 times farther than Sirius, Herschell reckoned 116,000 stars to pass in a quarter of an hour over the field of view, which subtended an angle only of 15'. If we compute from such a narrow zone, the whole celestial vault must display, within the range of telescopic vision, the stupendous number of more than five billions of fixed stars.

52. Imagination is bewildered in the immensity of such prospects. But a sober retrospect of the progress of astronomy would aid our conception of the structure and harmonious adjustment of the infinite universe.

53. If the material universe could have any limits, it would follow that it must then occupy but a minute point in infinite space; and if, in tracing back the earth's history, and arriving at the monuments of events which may have happened millions of ages before our time, we could still trace a commencement, and if the past duration of the world could be finite,—then the aggregate of geological epochs, however numerous, must constitute a mere moment of the past—a mere infinitesimal portion of eternity.

54. In vain do we aspire to assign confines to the existence of universal genera in *space*, and we are prepared, therefore, to discredit that there can be limits to the universe in point of *time*. To assume beginning or end to a necessarily infinite and eternal UNIVERSE is inconsistent with *reason*.

55. Anaximander, the Greek, said, “ it is only in infinity that the perpetual changes of things can take place. Every thing contained in infinitude is subject to change, itself alone being unchangeable.”

56. The phenomena of the universe present a series of changes of which the regularity and harmonious succession excite the surprise of superficial observers, and awaken the admiration and attention of the philosophical mind. These changes are either accompanied by visible motion susceptible of admeasurement and relate to the exterior forms

and mechanical characters of bodies ; or they depend upon the mutual agencies of the elementary properties of matter upon its compositions, or upon its susceptibility of acquiring new properties by entering into new combinations.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER II. PART II.

1.

1. Time is nought of itself. Eternity is but synonymous with the series or succession of natural occurrences which ever have operated, and ever will go on operating in the infinite world.

2. Time is but the relation of natural representations. It has objective validity only with respect to phenomena ; for these are the things which we take as the *objects of our senses*. Time is, therefore, a mere subjective condition of human intuition, and is, in itself, independently of our subject, nothing at all. Experience is the very condition which connects time with the representations of objects. If we take away from time its quality of being the peculiar condition of the sensitive faculty, the conception of it vanishes.

3. To say that time must necessarily be eternal, is but to admit the necessary eternity of natural representations.

4. Time, like space, is but a word ; and can effect no more than a reference to phenomena ; time is but space occupied by the necessary course of physical incidents.

5. Death is but opposed to life, the former being merely the privative of the latter. Experience shows that every individual must die, and there is nothing more humiliating in our death than in our birth.

6. Every animal must not only begin to exist, and have that existence dissolved by death, but, subject to premature casualty, must likewise pass through a number of intermediate changes in its appearance and affections. Infancy, youth, maturity, and old age, are characterized by imbecility, beauty, fertility, decay.

7. The path of life can be trod by individuals but once.

8. To believe that the action of our bodies, as a sentimental representative, does survive their dissolution and disappearance, is but an ignorant notion maintained in the minds of the credulous dupes of the priest-enriching craft, called religion.

9. What is the chaos of fantastical and incoherent representations—the heavens ; the triune one, or ones ; what, the human mind conceived as a vapour or a shadow after death—those chimerical phantoms called “souls ;” what, the extravagant dogma of their immortality—units of post-vital eternity ? What, but notions impressed by dictatorial authority, against whose officious impositions the weak and puerile understandings of ignorant men could not contend ?

10. Man's sensibility to life having commenced at the insignificant term within his recollection, how can he extravagantly presume that a principle of conscious identity shall ensue and survive, for a future interminable continuance, that corporeal organization, on the exercise of the functions of which, he finds that his senses entirely depend?

11. Who that duly reflects can for a moment flatter his own self-important conceit with the inordinate expectation of retaining his personality after its natural dissolution, of being installed in immortality, and of succeeding to a glorious career, or dismal torments: to endure beyond any definable period, yea, eternally?

12. Locke wrote—"The usual physical proof (if I may so call it) of the immortality of the soul, is this: 'matter cannot think, *ergo*, the soul is immaterial; nothing can really destroy an immaterial thing—*ergo*, the soul is really immortal.'"—What is an immaterial thing? Answer,—nothing.

13. It is evident that the mind of man is liable to decay and death with the body. If the organ perishes, its functions must inevitably terminate. If the brain dies, its functions—mind—must cease. As well might we expect that digestion should continue when life has left the stomach, as that mind should continue when life has left the brain.

14. If the eye becomes dim, the ear dull of hearing, the palate incapable of tasting, and the nostril devoid of smell; so the memory becomes weak, the judgment erroneous, the understanding embarrassed, the will slow in its decisions, and the organs that are subject to it slack in their obedience; inducing superannuation and mere oblivion. It is but a step further to the total extinction of life, and cessation of all living functions—that is, in other words, to the death of the body with its mind: in short, the fabric is no longer a living system: it is absorbed in the boundless infinity of nature.

15. Man although of transient identity, exercises the natural functions by means of which he acquires the sense to perceive the possibility of his race being immortal; and observing that to every thing around him belongs the same property of perpetuating its generic existence; informed also of the moral impossibility of comprehending space or ascertaining duration, he is warranted in adopting the conviction that the scenes familiar to his senses, belong to the passing lapse of a necessarily infinite and eternal universe of similar order or mode; and that in the successional series of individual species, the complexional features of the genera are fixed and unchangeable—uncommenced and interminable. Intelligent observation and deep reflection confirm him satisfactorily in the justness of these conclusions.

16. Dr. Brown has shewn that there is "a principle by which it is impossible for us not to believe that the course of nature has been eternally uniform in all the simple sequences that have composed or may hereafter compose it, and that the same antecedents, therefore, have always been followed by the same consequents; that whatever we observe becomes at once, by the influence of this principle, representatives to us of the past and the future, as well as of the present."

17. The infinite lends itself not to experience. We can never find a cause whose casualty does not again presuppose a cause; that is, we never can experience an independant cause. Every thing that happens has a cause, but its casualty is again something that happens. To experience an infinite series of events which are dependent on each other, is morally impossible.

18. Consciousness can only extend to finite perceptions; infinite intellect would be the same as infinite comprehension—and to suppose it possible that the infinite can be finite is manifestly absurd.

19. A necessary and most important part of our intellectual constitution, is the elemental law of thought, by which we assume the uniformity of causation. By this alone can we reason backward and forward between causes and effects, as also between effects and causes, and convert the past, present, and future, reciprocally into each other. It is therefore admitted, at once and universally, that like causes produce like effects.

20. An apparent modification in the sequence of events may be no violation of the order of nature, although we cannot explain the change.

21. In matter and motion are involved the infinite phenomena attending the cycle of nature's operations, and that system of unity and simplicity, which the advancement of discovery is always bringing further into view, will at length be sufficiently unfolded to allow of all the physical sciences eventually being traced to the varied development of these two principles.

22. At the fountain of nature, the well-spring of truth is unlocked.

2.

1. Time is but the sensation, or perception, of the world's motions; the sensations succeeding each other, step by step, as the motions proceed. Duration is universally measured by motions, and is merely the sensations which accompany them in succession, as cause and effect.

2. Time is an ocean in which intelligence is lost; nor can it embrace more than the insignificant point of individual life commencing with birth and ending with death.

3. Space is another ocean, of which it would be equally vain to attempt the exploring. What place does the mundane system occupy, in the midst of a world of systems, the suns or central objects of which our eyes perceive with difficulty, and of infinite others of whose existence our reason alone informs us.

4. Time includes and absorbs the infinite events, progress, and history, of natural organizations; their motions and phenomena being mere deflections of the planetary motions with which they are connected.

5. Of all the matter that is given to the mind, it is impossible to meet with any that is not contained in the two receptacles, Time and Space: therefore, time and space contain the sum and substance of all our knowledge.

6. It is not possible that knowledge can arise from any thing but perceptions, or that enjoyment of any kind, or even a sense of being, can be experienced, except from the perceptions connected with a mode of being.

7. Perception must arise from action and contact; it is not possible to conceive of it as arising by any other means, and, therefore, there must be something which, by its action and contact with the percipient, or by certain changes or effects arising from its action, produces the specific perception experienced in each particular instance.

8. As perception involves the existence of that which is percipient and of that which is perceived, it is obvious that perception is the foundation of that attribute or quality, which is understood to be designated by the term *mind*: mind is a mere consequence.

9. The true idea to be associated with the term *mind*, is that of the consequences which are termed intellectual and moral; being merely the accident of physical agencies. Mind can have in itself no entity, no positive existence, for its characteristics are not properties or attributes which inhere in any thing that exists independently of things, but are strictly relative, and are effects or consequences that result from physical action.

10. The error into which men have been led by the designing "Theologians," consists in the notion that *mind*, or intelligence, is a property or attribute natively inherent in a peculiar identity, and which identity, with its mental and intellectual attributes, is distinct from, and *exists* and *possesses its faculties*, independently of all physical agencies or causes.

11. Such phenomena, the explication of which is not easy, present themselves, and, instead of connecting them by due research in mechanical science, deified powers, exactly analogous to *witchcraft*, are invented; nature is then mystified instead of being explained; while the manœuvre is defended by such sophistries as few have ability or leisure to detect, or sufficient independence and courage to expose.

12. All *belief* in causes not in material contact, and not analogous to the effect, is *belief in witchcraft*, whatever be the disguise of its name.

13. If we except animal life, we cannot in anything around us discover consciousness and perception, and this mode of physical agency alone possesses mental faculties, or brains. We may examine inanimate bodies and their elements with the closest possible scrutiny,

but we shall not detect in them any indications of percipient sensibility, *i. e.* of organs of sense.

14. As long as the brain is endowed with life and remains uninjured, it, like any other organ, can perform its functions, and *mind* continues; but, as in all other organs, when its life ceases, its power to perform its functions ceases, and the mind ceases. When injury has affected the brain, the mind is affected; if originally constituted defective, the mind is defective; accordingly as it varies with age in quality and bulk, is the mind also varied. The qualities of the mind are also hereditary, which they could not be, unless they were, like other qualities, corporeal conditions.

15. Mental powers are as entirely dependent upon physical agencies as are all the other phenomena displayed in the natural world; and all the faculties and properties of the human economy are the result of physical processes.

16. It will, perhaps, be said that no one pretends to know the *nature* of any thing that exists. This is, in some measure, true; it is true so far as the term "knowledge" refers to modes, faculties, and processes, that are universally, and necessarily eternal or uncommenced. But the whole fabric of human science is built upon *nature*. The term "primæval" is incompatible with eternity.

17. It is not conceivable that, as regards the universal condition, either physical agencies or intellectual attributes could have had a priority in respect of each other; it is not possible that either could ever have existed without the other.

18. The animal system is a mode of being perpetuated by the very condition of its own faculties, and is an apparatus, like all other forms and substances, in which chemical changes are constantly going on. Life is but a circulation of actions, in which compound bodies are constantly decomposing each other, and assimilating and combining afresh by the elective affinities of their constituents, and by which means the new combinations are formed that sustain the mode of being, in which they circulate.

19. The breathing world possesses every degree of life, from the genius which animates the brightest of mankind to the being which vegetates without sense or motion; yet all these elements, however great, however mean, contribute alike to one vast conclusion—the universal mundane system.

20. Matter in no one shape is permanent, but its perpetuity consists in its successive forms. It is by form that the identity of species is manifested, but the component substances of individual bodies are continually changing. Form alone is persistent; form alone is perpetuated by being multiplied. Transmitted by the processes of generation and combination to endless series of individuals, the universal material is successively drawn into forms of different substances, but each individual transitory:

"For what am I, or what art thou,
Or what the cloud and radiant bow,
Or what are waters, winds, and seas,
But elemental energies?"

21. We hear and read much about "Creation," and "a Supreme Being." Theologians teach that their deity is *infinite* in attributes; but to speak of *infinite supremacy* involves and expresses a contradiction of ideas. *Supremacy* necessarily implies *subordination*; and if there be a *supreme* and a *subordinate*, there must also necessarily be *limitation*, and each must be limited in all its attributes. Now, infinity cannot possibly be limited,—and as supremacy infers the existence of that which is subordinate, either the attribute of infinity, or that of supremacy, must be discarded; because they are contradictory to each other: and thus, the proposition of 'an *infinite supreme being*' involves an absurdity, as being incompatible with the *moral impossibility of reducing the necessarily infinite universe within the bounds of comprehension, or supremacy*. To speak of an "infinite supreme" is like speaking of a "*creation*" out of nothing; the terms involve a similar confusion and absurdity of ideas; like the whole fabric of "divinity," it is a senseless jargon of unmeaning and contradictory words. Infinity and Eternity are morally inscrutable and inexplicable.

22. Man will never cease to be erroneous in his reasonings, while he departs from the simple and uniform ground of eternity—nature—the only solid basis of all conclusive argument, the only source of all true science.

23. Truth should be the object of every man's pursuit; for it is unalterable, whatever may be the errors men may imbibe, or the *Creeds* they may trust in. The discoveries of science and investigations into the modes of that nature in the midst of which man lives, and the processes by which objects are produced, will be truly valuable if truth be the object of pursuit.

24. If we turn our attention to the objects which surround us, even infinitely, we only discover material existence. All that the senses can teach, is, that there exist great varieties and diversities of forms, substances, or modes of being, with relative characters and properties, in consequence of which various and diverse effects are produced; that such perceptions are the extent of knowledge, and with which the modulations of sound constituting the terms of language are mechanically associated, and to which perceptions they alone should refer.

25. Mechanical training, or what is called education, may be carried to such perfection that every individual shall associate precisely the same perception with the same term; and yet after all, no knowledge will be gained except an apprehension of each other's perceptions,—and no powers can be obtained by the most fluent and correct use of words, except that of accurately communicating our perceptions to each other.

26. The mode or condition of the universe has eternally been such as it is, and Eternity precludes "first principles," or "elementary formation;" and when the properties of bodies, or their "elements," are spoken of, nothing more can be meant or conveyed, than certain perceptions to which they give rise under certain circumstances. Know-

ledge does not *really* extend beyond our sensibility or such effects as are produced upon that embodied and organized compound, which constitutes individuality of being; and the terms of language used, therefore, can refer only to those affections of our sensibilities; they are associated with the perceptions thence arising, and they convey no information except of those perceptions.

27. The senses of man can make known to him nothing more than certain effects or consequences, of which he is sensible as they arise, and that the existing mode of being derives its properties from the previous causes which existed and acted with it in producing that particular mode of being. The characters and properties of things are to be known only as they display themselves and are experienced by conscious and percipient beings, and the action that exists around us cannot be traced to "principles," or "first causes."

28. Nothing is more evident than that all phenomena are the necessary and inevitable consequences of the action of natural agencies, the existence of which can only be appreciated by experiencing their operation and observing the effects they produce. In the properties of bodies, or in the application of native capabilities, nothing more can be recognized by the mind than the regular and systematic action which necessarily produces certain uniform effects or consequences; the "nature of the being" of any substance or individual formation may be scrutinized, it may be subjected to experiment or analysis, its mode of action ascertained, and a certain degree of insight may be obtained into its operation and the effects it produces; but all that can possibly be discerned is, that there are certain processes that naturally are followed out, and certain effects which necessarily arise from these causes.

29. As the material and visible world around us, displays the inseparable relation of causes and effects, so it is also evident that the kinds of existence it displays, and all the variety of operations that are perpetually going forward in it, are subject to fixed, unalterable modes, which must obviously be the case, because those modes are the determining causes of the consequences to which they lead.

30. The natural modes of being, by interchanging themselves in a variety of combinations, mutually display each other, and, in this display, every succeeding exhibition necessarily involves that which preceded it.

31. The elements of all *knowledge* are to be found in the phenomena or effects exhibited by matter—by natural existences—to the organs of the senses. The word "cause" merely implies that such and such phenomena precede such and such other. If we were to lay aside the use of the term, *cause*, when referring to the order of successional phenomena, the doctrine of *causation*, or more properly speaking, of natural progression, would be placed upon a more intelligible basis, and no phenomenon or object of sense would then be admitted among causes.

32. The knowledge of the independent continuous universe is gained only by reflection on, or observing the relations of our sensations.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER III. PART II.

1.

1. Whenever the mind has been misled in the field of belief, and is without the guidance of sound fundamental conceptions, the imagination takes upon itself the whole business, without the understanding being aware of it. Should it even suspect this obtrusive interference, it is unable to separate what is its own from what has been improperly forced upon it; nay, in order to avoid the humiliating confession that it is not able to give a satisfactory account of super-sensible phantoms, it will rather persuade itself that these creatures of the speculative fancy *are* cognizable by the sensible faculties.

2. There is obvious inconsistency in the argument which infers from the adaption of means to ends in the order of nature, that it must have been framed by a designing or planning being; as though such a being could himself be exempted from the condition of the same argument and not require to receive a necessary mechanism of organs for supplying the functions of intellect and enabling him to plan. The error lies in the defect of discernment in not perceiving that an universe, attaching to it an impracticability of comprehension or origin, cannot be the creature of something superior to moral possibilities; in not conceiving that there can be no "first cause" for that which is not finite. Intention cannot have instituted an infinite and eternal process of phenomena, the existence of which is morally necessary.

3. Eternity cannot be compassed. Every animal, every vegetable, every planetary system, have ever derived their formal being from preexisting causes, and no such thing as "self-existence" has ever been possible. Any one form of matter is as much its property as other forms, and the existence of man is as necessary, or as eternally incident to nature or the universe as the existence of air or water.

4. Dr. Clark speaks of the infinite series as a *whole*, but does not the term "whole" imply limits—and how can infinity have any boundaries?

5. Man, as an individual, is mortal; but there is no absurdity in supposing that the race is immortal. Each generation—itsself preceded by numberless other generations—produces, before it becomes extinct, another generation; and thus the species is continued eternally.

6. Every term of the series is an effect, and therefore dependant on a preceding cause—and yet the series is not caused.

7. With what propriety does Dr. Clark suppose an origin or beginning, when by the adverse hypothesis, there was no beginning? When he speaks of a thing as "*originally possible from eternity*,"—is there not implied a palpable contradiction?

8. "An infinite chain," says Paley, "can no more support itself

than a finite chain;"—but are the cases analogous? A chain cannot support itself, because it is acted upon by a power exterior to itself; it obeys the law of gravitation. But there is no external power on which the infinite chain of causes and effects can depend. The very notion that it requires support, implies the absurdity of an effect without a cause.

9. No metaphysician ever read Clark's argument in proof that "matter cannot be eternal," and that "the world, therefore, could not always have existed," without detecting its fallacies.

10. That language can effect no more than a reference to phenomena, springs from no conventional limitation, but is founded in the nature of knowledge. Its perversion to give effect to supernatural illusion can only succeed in gaining its purpose when practised on the ignorant.

11. Tutored to subserve the ends of priestcraft, we have been taught to mix superstitious imagination with our conception of natural powers, and to interweave the fables of religion with the phenomena of nature: this has been the case universally.

12. The terrors of the world's "destruction," and of the consummation of man's destiny, are made to fill the most frothy declamations and to support the wildest visions.

13. If analogy teaches us that no effect happens without its cause, and that all causes become effects with reference to that which precedes them,—does it not follow that pretended deity itself could not be "*self-caused*," but must have been preceded by something else that preceded it? And that something again produced by some prior cause?—and so on *ad infinitum*.

14. If, to say that the universe exists eternally, be to assert that it was the work of chance, which some absurdly assert, then is the doctrine that "deity" is "self-existent," equally an assertion that *it* also is the creation of chance.

15. The very application of the term "*All-mighty*" to the phantom to which the faculty is attributed of comprehending infinity, is absurd; because the universe cannot be included by the term *all*.

16. The idea of cause is a consequence of our consciousness of the force we ourselves exert in subjecting externals to the changes dictated by our volition. From this we deduce the presence of a force which causes those other changes of matter in which we have no part. It is this association of ideas that predisposes the ignorant mind to impute intelligence to the unascertained causes of natural phenomena. Experience shewing the constant recurrence of certain antecedents with certain consequences, while it dispels the error of the unenlightened concerning voluntary agents, strengthens the perception of natural causes into a principle. The human mind cannot conceive a cause which is not necessary; because the same experience which proves that it is a cause, proves the universality of its antecedence to the effect with which it stands in relation.

17. The causes which have produced certain effects in past time,

will produce effects of the same kind hereafter. If any event should take place exceedingly different from any thing that has been witnessed in the world before, the just inference would be, that there had existed sources of causation which had been unknown to us, and we should only perceive an additional developement of its tendencies. It is impossible to be certain that we have exhausted all the phenomena of causation; there may be causes the tendency of which is to operate in a cycle of a million of centuries, and to which the world's experience bears not the same proportion as half an hour to a year.

18. There is a propensity in ignorant minds to view nature as it were, at intervals, or at the end of fixed periods, without regarding its gradual and unceasing action.

19. The mind is but too apt to seek for a mysterious agency, to explain effects which have been, are still, and eternally will be, produced by some simple operation of nature.

20. The timid servility of religious ignorance becomes easily impressed with fear and awe of a being so tremendous in all the effects of which credulity accounts him the primary cause—while they shrink from the idea of irritating the vengeful jealousy of their idol.

21. In the expanse around this little globe on which he dwells, the Christian imagines mighty lands peopled with phantoms;—spirits, souls, demons, angels, fiends, and innumerable wondrous ministers of human temptation, or servants of saintly triumph;—all beyond the immediate sphere of his own senses, to him is a vision, mystery, hell, heaven, and the substance of a dream!

22. The enthusiast passes through life, dreaming as he goes, unconscious of whatever is real, and busy with whatever is notional.

23. Nothing can be more strange than the systems of religion which fancy (for reason it cannot be called) has devised.

24. The superstitious weakness of mankind is astonishing. There is, indeed nothing so absurd but they may be made most firmly to believe in it, nor so inhuman, but they will perpetrate it, if urged thereto by the priest in the name of his pretended "god." Ease is procured to the conscience by means of strict adherence to those religious forms which so effectually silence remorse in the real bigot.

25. Whenever they possess the power, there is no deficiency of will in the priesthood to force some rude and filthy fable of divinity of origin down the throats of mankind.

26. The mass of mankind are imposed upon by big sounding names and pompous formalities, which, however, have seldom failed to ensure, to those who have assumed the one and officiated in the other, power, ease, luxury, and splendour, at the expense of those who have been foolish or base enough to acquiesce, or to seem to acquiesce in the fitness of the assumption.

27. Religions embrace, in their establishment, the most powerful of the circumstances which first convulse, and afterwards fix, as in an iron mould, the character of our race.

28. In the round of mutations to which human affairs are liable, it

has repeatedly occurred that a single enterprising and artful fanatic has succeeded in revolutionizing the religion of a whole people—in effacing every vestige of their former worship, and establishing a new ceremonial in its place.

29. How often has the world witnessed the apparition of a monomaniac possessed with one paramount, eternal idea, showing himself to the multitude, and straightway involving those who approach him in his own wayward and senseless hallucinations.

30. Of all the various obstacles that simple truth, however rational and consistent, meets with in its approaches to the human mind, none are more difficult to overcome than popular and superstitious prejudice.

31. Man has so long been accustomed to submit himself, as the subservient machine of priests, that he is deprived of the power to act on his own impulses, or conceive an original thought.

32. On minds under the influence of superstition, or bigotry, the simplest suggestions of reason, and the most obvious dictates of justice, are equally incapable of making the slightest impression.

33. Religious bigots are always up in arms against those who attack their ignorant prejudices.

34. Superstition reconciles mankind to very gross observances, and harmonizes all sorts of contradictions.

35. Observing that, among mankind, the most destructive and hardened nature may be mollified by persevering flattery and submission, superstition tried upon its “god” the arts which succeeded with the former.

36. The foundation of all religion is the superstitious belief in the existence of supernatural beings possessed of power to affect our happiness.

37. It concerns the interest and happiness of the human race, not only that the truth should be discovered, but that it should be made known to the greatest number possible.

38. The knowledge of the physical causes of the various phenomena of nature is not only important on account of its multiplying the comforts and resources of mankind; it effects a great moral good, by making us acquainted with the relation in which we stand to the universe, thereby tending to eradicate superstition and destroy the fancied connection which the vanity or timidity of man has been eager to establish between what have been called “celestial influences,” or “supernatural powers,” and his own insignificant destiny.

39. There can be no better method by which the cavils of sophistry may effectually be overthrown, than by having recourse to the doctrine of universal certainty.

40. Truth is not to be discovered by an implicit obedience to pre-existing dogmata, but by a diligent, untiring, and careful use of reason and observation.

41. In making physical observations, we perceive what phenomena are more or less consequent on each other, and thus we acquire a real and truly important knowledge of the course of nature—the conditions of existence.

2.

1. Among most tribes and nations, "Religion" originated in ignorance of the causes of natural phenomena. Enjoyment and suffering were ascribed to the will of a powerful "Spirit." This primary idea was enlarged and diversified by dreaming, or thinking while the volition was torpid, and by illusions of the senses, which led to a belief in "ghosts," "signs," "omens," &c. These illusions were augmented by enthusiasts, and played upon by cunning impostors. Hence, there are superstitions in proportion to ignorance. Priests would have men believe that *they* are in communion with the "good genius," and are able to subdue the "evil one."

2. Often the senses become diseased, and perceptions arise from their excitement. Thence all those mistakes and illusions which ignorance and superstition have ascribed to supernatural agencies. Hence, all the ghosts, hobgoblins, visions, knockings, &c. &c., when not frauds and falsehoods.

3. Bound down as they are to the materiality of their nature, men, in every country, have created "divinities" after their own likeness; they have attributed to them their own passions, and enshrined them in their own weakness. "Religious" imagination, or superstition, may be reduced to the mere imagining of supernatural "phantoms" possessing all the frailties which the conferrer of "divine honours" feels himself, and to which he ascribes all the power from which he fancies he has anything to hope or fear.

4. It is easy to perceive that the "believer" in "mysteries," or "spiritualities," does little more than dress up his "deity" in the human attributes and qualifications.

5. Their pretended "science of theology" consisted in the invention of terms to express certain abstract ideas, or the notions which were connected with, and supposed to refer to the imagined "principles," or objects above physical and sensible things; and those high sounding terms were imposed on the people as expressing *truth* and conveying *knowledge*, when they in reality, had no reference whatever to any existing thing or quality, or property. Thus the priesthood contrived an ideal world of wordy nonentities, in which they might revel for their own ends.

6. Independent thinking is always arduous, and seldom brought into active operation. It is so much more easy to refer to the opinions of other men, than to form or sustain any opinions of our own, that mental indolence may justly be considered as one chief occasion of the errors which prevail in the world. "Religions" the most delusive have been handed down from age to age, perhaps with some trivial alterations, but without any examination of the grounds on which they rested. Thus men's understandings have been debilitated by injurious habits; truth and error have been confounded; and fraud and hypocrisy have prevailed.

7. Theological wit discovered the "sublime Truth" that power and skill could be exercised, without the existence of any thing to exert it, or of any thing for it to be exerted upon; that by some magic spell things could spring into being, which previously had no being; that universal Nature could spring into action, not from that which previously had no such powers or properties merely but absolutely from *no source at all*.

8. The mysterious something, besides the antecedent and consequent event—"the idea" as something apart from the perceiving mind and the thing perceived, which could multiply itself through "all" variety, and continue its existence through "all" time,—and yet which did nothing—was preceptible to nobody but the priests who were admitted within the arcana of the mystic temple.

9. "O," says the 'religious' devotee, "what wondrous power! what sublime skill!" *Hocus-pocus* can do every and any thing; "Jehovah" is the great factotum—the underived "godhead." But these points are for the consideration of the wise.

10. If this were a subject of mere speculative curiosity, it would be of little moment, but we have known the monstrous consequences that inevitably flow from this fundamental error, *i. e.* the *speaking or willing the universe into existence*;—it is, in fact, the corner-stone upon which the fabric of "religious" delusion rests, and if it be struck out, the whole pile of imposition, called "Religion," must crumble into ruins.

11. It is altogether impossible to conceive of a "*Creation*"—of any thing being, by an exercise of power or skill, produced absolutely *from nothing*. How is it morally possible that power, skill, or any kind of ability, can have any existence, or be exercised, in reference to *non-entity*? The very ideas which the terms convey necessarily involve absurdity. In all cases where ability and talent are spoken of, something is necessarily implied to which the skill and talent have reference. But the *something* upon which the christian's "god" exerted power to produce the universe, was—*nothing at all*! So thoroughly absurd is the notion, that it is contradicted by the very terms used to convey the proposition. We hear insisted upon the dogmas of a "*creation out of nothing*," and of "*created*" things being "*resolved into their primitive nothing*." According to these terms, *nothing* is *something*, *out of which* things have been *produced*, and *into which* they can again be *resolved*: the terms, *out of*, refer to a *source*, and that *source*, we are told, is —*no source at all*. The notion attempted to be conveyed cannot be expressed in words, and it is obvious that terms have been assumed without considering their import, or what they involve; and then these assumed terms have been used as though they conveyed ideas, when they really convey none. Upon such assumptions rests the whole fabric of "Theology."

12. It is scarcely necessary to point out the monstrous conclusions that result, as inevitable consequences from the proposition that "*nature was a creation*." Impotence, incapacity, ignorance, and

malignty, one or all, are of necessity to be ascribed to the "Creator" on the conclusion that "created" existences have no faculties but such as flowed from its (the Creator's) will. Was it unable to create, or incapable of creating elements, and endowing them with properties that should lead to perfect results? Was it ignorant of the nature of the elements it had made, of their capabilities and propensities; of the qualities of the beings which would result from their combinations; of the relative powers of those embodied compounds, and the capability of one to exert an influence over another? Or was it indifferent to the production of good or evil, happiness or misery; or was it simply desirous of displaying its "*almightiness*" in effecting this "creation," and of exercising its uncontrolled and arbitrary sovereignty over the "destinies" of the helpless *him* or *her* whom this "god" of no gender had made? And was "salvation" necessary to remedy this "creator's" mistakes, and to counterbalance the exercise of this arbitrary power? Such conclusions are unavoidable if we consider the hypothesis of a "creator," or the other dogmas of the "*Theologians*."

13. Were it possible every thing and person which exist, except a "spiritual," or *nothingous* "Supreme Creator" could have been produced by its "conjunction" *out of nothing*,—all the consequences that flow from such "creation," have their origin in its will, and spring from its dispensations. If nature—the universe—existed by a "god's" appointment, and had no properties nor faculties but those *imparted*, how is it that it was not endowed with such powers and properties as should have prevented that train of *natural* evils, physical and moral, with which the world abounds? If the "elements" of infinite existence were called into being from nothing?—why had they not properties which should have secured perfection? Did it arise from the want of ability in the "creator," or was there no inclination in such to produce happy results? Either the one or the other must be admitted as necessarily following from the principles assumed.

14. The consequences involved in these premises, considering them in the connection with the theological systems, are such as might appal even their most strenuous advocates.

15. Certain beings are created, some visible and others invisible, and are so placed that one class can exercise an influence upon another, the visible, or material, being subjected to the controul of the invisible, or "spiritual," of whose presence the former are not even conscious. One class (men and women) are, by the influence of the other class ("devils") led into "sin," and consequently become obnoxious to the "curse" of their "Creator," and are subjected to evils great and various.

16. To crown the whole, to make absurdity still more absurd, we are further informed by the "doctors of divinity," that a "salvation," is provided; a god engendered dies on a cross to appease the vengeance of a god unengendered. But those who hear of this "salvation," have no power to secure its benefits to themselves. All men are

placed in circumstances of the greatest danger; difficulties surround them on every hand; "devils" deceive them and "hell" yawns at their feet; a deliverance is provided, but they cannot touch it; for, in each partial case of "salvation," the benefit can only be obtained by a particular interposition of "divine love," or "divine power," or "divine caprice." By far the larger portion of those "fallen," under the malign influence and "curse," and subject to the evil consequences, have not even a chance of being "saved," as the benefit is dealt out with a sparing and niggardly hand only to the favoured few—the "elect." The millions are plunged in "everlasting torment and misery," as the necessary consequence of their creation and constitution, and of the circumstances in which they are placed, all of which circumstances are perfectly independent of their own will and power, and beyond their control; while the favoured "saints," also altogether independently of themselves, and by the sovereign will and all controlling majesty of the "Creator" of both "saved" and "damned," are made the participators of "seraphic bliss" and "everlasting glory." And the misery of those "damned," is inflicted upon them as a "punishment" for that to which they are subjected—nay destined, without their own will, and which they can not avoid or escape. Puny, impotent, "mortals," are thus made to be taunted and sported with in "the present life," and for the "divine" pleasures of "pouring wrath" upon them through the endless hereafter:—poor "damned" wretches!!!

17. This is the predicament in which man is placed, as represented by the dogmas of the *theologians*; and a pretty serious scrape truly it is! It is scarcely necessary to say, that opinions and doctrines of such import, and inevitably involving such consequences, cannot possibly have any foundation in *Truth*. They form the "craft;" they serve the purposes of the "*priesthood*;" and they have no existence except in the schemes of "*theology*," and in the knaveries and duperies of "*religion*."

18. Infinity—the necessary condition—obviously demonstrates the falsity of the "religious" feignings of "deity" and "creation." Ignorance alone can be found in the practice of mutely, mock-solemnly, and superstitiously, listening to the pulpit-drawl, or whining forth of the phrases, "O thou comprehender of the Universe!"—"O thou triune deity!"—"O thou almighty!"—and such other "divine" stuff.

19. But to those who love ignorance, and who make their own senseless conceits the subjects of their "*faith*,"—the greater are the impossibilities involved in their "creed," the more sublime are its "mysteries," and the stronger their bigotry.

20. Ignorance and superstition are the noxious weeds which always flourish in the gloomy shades of "implicit faith" and spiritual slavery.

21. Timorous men start at the light of *reason*, as an *ignis fatuus*, which would lead them into dangers; while the venal priests and their

corrupt subservients deprecate it, as being repugnant to their interests and destructive to their pomp and consequence.

22. When errors and abuses have been of long continuance, they become so completely engrafted on our thoughts, habits, and daily ceremonies, that an effort to get rid of their influence resembles an attack upon some member of the body corporate—a forced sacrifice of a portion of our physical being.

23. It is remarkable that among all the errors and ignorances, which a diffusion of real science is capable of discomfiting, superstition is invariably the last which relinquishes its hold on the human mind.

24. Ignorant man is continually under the influence of some ideal terror, some undefined apprehension, which he is unable by any exertion to banish from his mind. It is most frequently an artificial feeling in its first approaches, generated by imposed fiction and implanted in the nursery; yet so firmly is it rooted in the mind by the potent efficacy of early impression, that all the attempts of after-life, though invigorated by ripened faculties and an improved judgment, are unable to eradicate it; credulity and superstition still reign with tyrannic sway in many hearts, how reluctant soever they may be to acknowledge it.

25. If men would venture to exercise freedom of thought, and would make a proper use of their understandings and consciences, they would not be then cajoled by every insinuating imposture. But if their minds are so biassed or terrified as to yield a servile and tame submission, and to receive implicitly what men have enjoined and transmitted, by tradition from their forefathers,—they must of necessity be exposed to endless delusions, to the most stupid and hurtful superstitions, and be in danger of being deprived of the proper use of their senses, as well as of the common principles of humanity.

26. In every age, those who have attempted to enslave the consciences of men, have begun by debasing the human intellect, and by discouraging its enquiries into those “sacred” fictions which are assumed by the priesthood; well knowing, that if the light of reason can be obscured, there are no impostures so ridiculous and absurd but they will be greedily swallowed, and no impositions so exorbitant and oppressive but they will be devoutly acknowledged by the undiscerning and credulous multitude.

27. Those who have surrendered their reason, know of course no cause why they should not next surrender also their purses to the church.

28. The *church-secret* consists in debasing mankind and imposing on their credulous fears, in order to draw from them the most money and the most respect possible.

29. In proportion to the political influence and the power of any priesthood, will be the retrogression and abasement of the human mind.

30. Let any man look with an impartial eye over the history of

mankind, and then say if the “Ecclesiastics” have been useful to the welfare of the world, or have ever aimed at any thing *apart from their own interests*.

31. What priests do for the world, when they usurp the government of it, we have had proofs of. Whatever be the creed professed, the functions and habitudes of the sacerdotal office necessarily disqualify men for the due exercise of political and civil justice. Political religion is the most artful demoralizer ever employed for the enthralment and degradation of mankind. It is tyranny, without order; submission without peace; the bondage of “government,” without its protection. It enslaves the understanding, and lets loose the malignant passions; it engenders crime by the ignorance it fosters, and by the misery its wretched policy diffuses.

32. What is it that has sown dissension in all ranks of society? What is it that has made the father detest the child, and the son abhor the presence of his parent? What is it that has led to the atrocious persecutions and destructions of the victims of its power? What, but the *science* of “divinity?” What, but “the Church?”

33. What species of corporal suffering has not been inflicted upon men under the pretence of “*compelling them to come in,*” or “*delivering them unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved?*”

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER IV. PART II.

1.

“Old Error thus, with shades impure,
Throws sacred truth behind;
Yet, sometimes, through the deep obscure,
She bursts upon the mind.”

1. As no man can rise to the perception of higher principles of action than those of which he is himself conscious, when fools or impostors throw their “divinity” into action they necessarily impart to their idea something of their own weakness and infirmity. The mass of bigots and hypocrites end in worshipping a demon, a fancied monster. They may continue to call this idol of their fabrication, this reflection of their own vices, “most wise” and “most merciful,” &c. &c. but they attribute to their fearful phantom their own hateful passions and narrow views; and the result is a monster so much worse than themselves as they think he is more powerful and more uncontrolled. The deities of every nation have always been of the same character with the people that worshipped them.

2. See the gloomy Calvinists, the long faced sectarians, and the dark preachers of sacrifice all over the world.

3. It is quite deplorable to see how many there are who mistake suffering for “sanctity,” and who think that a sad face and a gloomy habit of mind are propitious offerings to their “deity.”

4. It is strange that man, who suffers so severely from the inclemency of the elements, "who hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery," should go so far out of his way to multiply uneasy sensations, and should so often dash aside the enjoyment which reason sanctifies, to court the privation which nature rejects. In strong defiance of animal instinct, there has existed at all times a marked disposition to make a merit of self-denial and mortification, and to consider it a virtue to outrage those senses and sadden that imagination which should promote man's happiness.

5. It is clear that men can have no interest in suffering ; no preference for unhappiness in itself ; and wherever they are found in headlong career after it, it must be under the impression that they are in pursuit of a different object.

6. It is error therefore, it is illusion, it is an incapacity on their part to see the real consequences of actions, the real issues of events, that give rise to all those evils which desolate the world, except such as can be traced to the physical circumstances of man's nature and condition.

7. There have always been found persons, whose organization of mind has alone been satisfied by an indulgence of the most gloomy views. Fanaticism is very frequently a constitutional disease. Some impediment in the play of the more intimate functions of life, deprives the individual of that "pleased alacrity and cheer of mind" which renders the bare state of existence delightful. A mind thus constituted, ill at ease with itself, looks out on the world for objects congenial with its own feelings. Fear and disgust are its predominating sentiments ; and while it fabricates its "deity" in its own image, it is pained by the aspects of enjoyments in which it cannot participate ; and the misanthropy of those who are thus minded, is indulged by efforts to impose their own austerity of manners, under the notion of strictness in religion, upon those who are more happily framed for nature and enjoyment.

8. The prevalence of misery, as the consequence of ignorance, shows at once the importance of the pursuit of accurate knowledge. To discover truth, is, in fact, to do good on a grand scale. The detection of an error, the establishment of a fact, the determination of a doubtful principle may spread benefits over large portions of the human race. The great interests of mankind, then, demand, that the way of discovery should be open ; that there should be no obstruction to enquiry ; that every facility and encouragement should be given to efforts which are directed to the detection of their errors ; and yet one of the greatest discouragements which at present exists is the state of their own moral sentiments.

"And all things weighed in custom's falsest scale ;
Opinion an omnipotence, whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light."

9. Any fool who will attack a religion, by opposing to it another as absurd as itself, will be sure of making converts and establishing a sect; but he who exposes superstition by the demonstration of its contradictions, will excite universal abhorrence, and will hardly escape stoning.

10. Man is not to be led to inquiry without danger. Those who so liberally reward the impostor, never fail to persecute the teacher; and while they swallow every falsehood and fable most injurious to their true interests and well-being with undoubting confidence, they oppose and impede every noble enterprize and every beneficial discovery in the range of moral and physical science.

11. Genius and feeling, obstructed at every step by dulness and prejudice, or revolted at the meanness and littleness which thwart them, stop short in their route, and recoiling on themselves, too often live alone and unbenefited by the world they enlighten and amuse.

12. He who disseminates truth, instead of attracting sympathy and gratitude, meets with a considerable share of odium as the consequence of his perspicacity.

13. Doctors in superstition, exercising a power over thought, have abolished reason, depraved humanity, and have artfully made nature a mystery,

14. The successful practice of the arts of imposture among ignorant and credulous people, is easy:

“Whate’er the mystic phrase lides from the sight,
The crowds of fools admire with fond delight.”

15. Minds struck with astonishment are incapable of reflection, and every thing yields to the impulse of the charm which they fear, or by which they are attracted.

16. Ignorant men have a propensity to refer to some extraordinary and supernatural cause every event but a little removed from their habitual experience; the same fondness for the marvellous, which once erected altars to “Fortune,” which armed the witch and the necromancers with their magic powers, even yet supplies crowds of votaries to every miracle-working sanctuary.

17. It is experience only which assures us of the order of nature; and it is the same experience which gives authority to human testimony. When, therefore, these two kinds of experience are contrary, we have but to decide in favour of uniformity in the operation of causes, and embrace the natural opinion with an assurance of its certainty. This principle, with regard to all popular religions, amount to an entire annihilation; and therefore we may establish it as a maxim, that no human testimony can have such force as to prove a “miracle,” and make its belief a just foundation for any such system of religion. To believe the evidence in favour of the miracle would amount to the unreasonableness of giving the less certain degree of knowledge the precedence over the more certain.

18. No event can be deemed miraculous merely because it is strange to our experience; since it can be nothing more than a regu-

lar effect of some natural cause. An Earthquake is as regular an effect of natural causes as any of those with which we are most intimately acquainted.

19. By representing every uncommon appearance in nature as a manifestation of "heaven's" wrath, and appealing to miracles and prodigies in evidence of their "divine" authority, artful men gained a permanent ascendancy over their less sagacious or more indolent countrymen: an adroit priesthood would readily convert to their own profit any unusual occurrence which came in their way, and suffer no phenomenon of this sort to escape their purpose.

20. The power of imagination in the cure of diseases, operates to a degree of which few are aware. Astonishment at their own occasional success is very likely to make many, who begin in this line as hypocrites, finish in it as fanatics.

21. Patients affected with their devotion, their expectations of relief, the place, the solemnity, and, above all, by the sympathy of the surrounding multitude, have been thrown into convulsions, which convulsions, in certain instances, may have produced a removal of disorders occasioned by obstructions.

22. It may be laid down as a general rule, that there are no bounds to the credulity of mankind. It is when persons of enthusiastic minds become themselves the dupes of their own delusions, that we see such wonderful effects produced.

23. Among the ancients, whatever surpassed their comprehension was regarded by the ignorant as a miracle, and every extraordinary degree of information attained by an individual, as well as any unlooked for occurrence, was referred to some peculiar interposition of a fancied supernatural power. The followers of different "divinities," far from denying the miracles performed by their opponents, only endeavoured to surpass them; in the contest of these hostile magicians, or priests, the successful combatant being considered to derive his assistance from the more powerful "god."

24. Pretended "miracles," depending upon the exclusive possession of natural science, must have terminated when this science mingled in the general mass of human knowledge.

25. When the world began to dispute on the very existence of the elementary folk, (angels, ghosts, &c.) then ceased the evidence in those unnatural accounts—miracles.

26. The montrosities reared on the doctrines regarding angelic ministrations, have produced much superstitious confusion in the human mind, equally evident in the lofty strains of Milton and in the humble lay of the Jack Tar, who sings,—

"There's a sweet little cherub sits perched up aloft,
Will look out for the life of poor Jack."

27. Regarding the accidents of life, how can a sensible mind give any credit to the interposing "providence," when no one has ever witnessed an avoidance of impending destruction by other than

natural means. Those who have eschewed imminent peril, proclaim loudly their obligations to "providence," without being mindful of the reproach they cast upon this same providence in every case where the natural means of preservation have been wanting.

28. To suppose that "providence" suffers a man to be brought into difficulty, and that it then steps in to help him out, is ludicrous; yet we have been seriously told that such a one was saved from shipwreck, earthquake, or fire, by "a particular interposition of divine providence." In all instances of unexpected escape from danger, the attention is struck with a deep sense of the near approach of death; and thus, that which is but the operation of natural cause and effect, seems to be something more than possible.

29. The regular operations of nature are imputed by ignorance to "divine providence." If particular instances prove the regard of providence for *favoured* individuals, what are the *sufferings* of other persons equally good proofs of? The answer is obvious enough to men of common sense, and fools are incapable of confutation.

30. There is no providence but the caution and care we are naturally disposed to take for our own safety, and the assistance we may derive from the exertions of others in our behalf, or from the concurrence of circumstances favorable to our preservation or success.

31. "Saint" Paul, or "Saint" Wesley, or "Saint" Whitfield, when they shook off the dust from their feet against those who declined to adopt the species of fanaticism which they were preaching, only practised that religious farce in order to intimidate the multitude and operate upon the credulous fears of those who might dread the evil effects of any *malison* or spell pronounced by a sorcerer or enchanter. Any outward accident or casualty that happened afterwards to the persons or properties of those who had been obnoxious to the curse was sure to be attributed by the ignorant weakness of the vulgar mind to the malign influence of the "hidden powers" that had been invoked on the occasion.

32. Can there be a greater degradation of intellect, a more shameful species of human depravity, than superstition, or faith in supernaturals? Can there be a more ignorant kind of credulity, than a belief in what does not exist? Can there be a more audacious imposture than the pretending to a knowledge of non-entities, and thus maintaining the sources of a profitable craft by practising on the simplicity of dupes?

33. Predicate what we will of religions in general, or of sects in general, for they are the same thing—they are all of the same intolerant, servile, bigoted, character.

34. Religion, it would appear, is always in harmony with the notions prevalent at any place,

"The common cry is still religion's test;
The Turk's is at Constantinople best;
Idols in India, Popery at Rome;
And our own worship's only true at home,—

And true but for the time; 'tis hard to know
How long we please it shall continue so."

35. In every country where ecclesiastical power prevails, the spirit of liberty is depressed. This axiom might have been pronounced even in remote ages, and it has held good in successive periods. One party has governed by the use of terrific agents, another by the employment of crafty measures: here the power of the inquisition has been employed, and there the most grovelling impositions practised; in one land the magnificent ceremonial has been summoned to dazzle the senses of the multitude, and in another, the most severe austerities have been affected, in order to win their admiration and excite their zeal;—whilst in those countries in which the institutions forbid the practice of such follies, the might employed by the priesthood has been that of *influence*, both direct and indirect, and by the means of which a force has accumulated, exercising an immense effect not only upon the manners of the people but frequently upon the proceedings of the government. All these circumstances operate very differently, although tending to the same end.

36. Experience teaches us that power usurped by the "Clergy" is contrary to the interests and happiness of mankind, and the page of history tells us that it is rarely won back, but at the price of blood, and through a revolutionary struggle.

37. Throughout the dark period of the reign of Christianity how have the people been deceived and abased!—Their creed, a fable; their morals, fear!

38. When the municipal law is once understood by the people to be actually revealed in their sacred books, and is incorporated with their general religious creed (as in the Koran, and as implied in "Christianity is part and parcel of the law of the land") there is nothing left for them but to become a stationary community—a stagnant pool: they can escape only by waiting till after a long struggle between institutions and opinions sanctified by reverential feelings on one side, and the irrepressible efforts of an advancing civilization, on the other, when they will at last, force their way to civil rights through the destruction of religious impositions

2.

1. A compilation of great interest, would be the history of popular superstition, and of the transmission of similar tales from age to age and from country to country. The mythology of one period would then appear to pass into the romance of the next,—and that into the nursery tales of subsequent ages. Such an investigation would tend greatly to diminish our ideas of the richness of human invention. The wide diffusion of popular fiction may be compared to the facility with which straws and feathers are dispersed abroad by the wind, while valuable metals cannot be transported without trouble and

labour. Endless instances might be produced of this community of fable among nations who never borrowed from each other any thing intrinsically worth learning. So intermingled are "divine revelations," "mythologies," wild and palpable fictions, fantastic imaginings, exaggerated allegories, poetical machinery, and the very insanity of human hopes, fears, and wishes, that indeed, less than an intimate acquaintance with the traditions of the nations that are, or remotely have been, upon the earth, would scarcely suffice for doing justice to the subject of the great and never to be analyzed body of popular superstition.

2. The unthinking mind of man not only indulges in, but doats on, mysteries without meaning, and superstitions without support. Some of these, indeed, have, by the genius of poets, been made the vehicles of elegant amusement and allegorical instruction; while others, dismal and "diabolical" have, by the cunning of craftsmen and stupidity of bigots, become predatory on society. There is a perverse propensity in unenlightened minds to embrace the incomprehensible, and to reject the obvious.

3. Men derive their "religions," either from their parents or their birth-places, and seldom in after-life do they question the creed, whether orthodox or heterodox, which has been implanted in infancy. The all-subduing influence of early-fostered credulity is proverbial. Once place a dogma in the catechism, and it becomes stereotyped for life, and is never submitted to the ordeal of examination.

4. The more ridiculous and unintelligible is the proposition men have embraced, the more pertinaciously have they clung to it; so that creeds, the most outrageous and contradictory have served as the occasion or pretexts for the most vehement disputes, bitter persecutions, bloody executions, and all that most deeply blots and dishonours the name of man; while often, the more frivolous and evanescent were the distinctions, the more furious and inexpiable were the contentions they produced. Millions have believed, or imagined they believed, propositions and systems, the terms of which they did not understand, and the evidences of which they never considered.

5. Men have also imbibed opinions which their fathers never entertained, errors of which the ancients never thought, and then they have connected their new notions with ancient terms, or invented new terms, or both, and by clothing the sentiments of former times in modern phraseology, they have compelled ancient writers to support modern errors.

6. Nothing can more necessarily lead to infinite mistakes and endless confusion, than the folly and unreasonableness of carrying back our ideas of particular terms, as the interpreters of the terms of ages of nations which certainly attached no such ideas to those terms, and had so such knowledge as our improved science, and consequently enlarged range of thought, has familiarized to us.

7. It is the idle and senseless superstitions of men which have wrapped their minds in the thick clouds of ignorance, and held them under an hierarchical bondage.

8. In the affair of "Religion," men in general want not to be enlightened, but to be moved; zeal and passion will beat reason hollow.

9. The folly of man, in all ages, has consisted in his imagining that there exist agencies, or invisible "spirits," or intelligent powers, or powers of some kind, which exercise a control over material and sensible things, above, and independently of the course of nature,—and which can produce any effects, or "miracles" they please, without and even in opposition to the action of natural means. This absurdity, so contrary to reason and fact, has been the foundation of "religions;" these "spiritual" powers, working by some inconceivable means, have been the "deities," whose malignity or wrath men sought to deprecate, or whose favour to conciliate, by religious ceremonies or worship.

10. When man imagines that the natural existence was *produced*, he knows not how, and from *no source at all*, by the "magic" spell of an inconceivable "spirit" dwelling he knows not where, he is dreaming of an absolute nonentity—a mere name, the unmeaning modulation of sound which his mouth mechanically produces when he says, "god!"—and before the fancied phantom this word indicates, he prostrates himself, or raises, he thinks, the religious parts of his eyes upwards towards "Heaven," though these words have no more reference to any thing or place that exists, than has the idol of fashioned wood or stone before which other religionists have bowed themselves down.

11. The "Religion" of the present day is in every respect the same as that of former times, only now men are intimidated by certain modulations of sound, instead of reverencing an image: the vices of modern "religion" are the same as those of former "religions."

12. The superstitious imaginings of a "spiritual," or supernatural personal phantom, the multiplication of such phantoms, and the idolatrous fooleries which such notions engender, are the essence of "religion;" images or pictures are nothing more than the representation of the idea in a palpable form; the whole error lies, not in the personifying, but in the sentiment, and in the substitution of unmeaning "devotion" instead of the exercise of that sound discretion and guidance by the correct understanding of that personal propriety in the conduct of life, upon which the prosperity and well-being of man depend.

13. Not less weak, false, and preposterous, will be found the moral, than the physical argument for "god." That a "spirit," or *nothing*, should create *out of nothing*, a race of material, sentient, percipient, and reasoning beings for the vain end of becoming the object of their adoration—for the indulgence of a passion for enjoying the awe and reverence of devotees—is morally monstrous. Power exacting adoration from weakness is the "divine" attribute. The tyrant, "deity," creates a race of men, transiently existing individuals, for the sublime gratification of contemplating them prostrate and pandering to its appetite for adoration—for the self-complacent satisfaction of possessing such power and glory. While, too, the devotee has the faculty of perceiving himself as capable of accom-

plishing the moral impossibilities—the comprehending of the universe which is necessarily incomprehensible, as could be any being that arrogated worship. In this moral inability to embrace the universe, even in thought, consists the great flaw in the celestial title. All claims to worship, or assuming ministerial office in the service of “god,” Reason discountenances and abandons.

14. Every tyrant exacts homage on the precedent of “religious” awe; tyranny and the exacting of awe and reverence are indissoluble; and it is “*godly, godly, godly*,” to possess *power* and require the subjects of *weakness* to crouch before it.

“And tis the craft of priesthood that hath shaped
A future world,—the kings of distant days
Have countenanced the fraud, that fools content
Might look for blessings in another scene
And bear the yoke more tranquilly in this,—
But joy to man! progressive centuries
Have erred, and wisdom now at length appears.”

15. Ignorant men, however, will be duped by the priests into the habit of *awe and reverence*—the habit of “adoring” the “sacred,” as long as the *impersonated abstraction* of *awful power* can be sustained as “deity;” and so long also will it be possible to make them bend before tyrannical human grandeur—the possession of riches and arrogant assumption of domination.

16. It is the majesty of the priesthood which those adore and worship, who would erect their “*Church*” on the ruins of humanity, and carry their “spiritual” conquest over slaughtered consciences. Mere ceremonies, if practised by individuals, would be insignificant and contemptible only; but those make them *essential* who erect authorities and practice persecutions, to enforce their observance. Days of ceremony and encroachments which are set up to pull down liberty—natural justice and natural right—must be rejected and abolished. External modes and days of rites only please men of superficial minds and fill the pockets of the “clergy.”

17. Before a juggler’s tricks are discovered, we admire him and give him money; but afterwards we care not for him; so it is when the juggle of the “*Church*” is brought to detection.

18. It is unjust that false pretensions, fraud and extortion, should be punished in the *fortune-teller*, and go unpunished in the *priest*.

19. Nothing has so decisive a tendency to promote the welfare of civil society at large, as the mind being unshackled from the imposition of *creeds* and left free to investigate all branches of knowledge. The human intellect placed in these propitious circumstances, will naturally direct its energies to all true subjects of investigation, and will be found in the best state to appreciate and adopt whatever is excellent, or useful to mankind.

20. When the mind unbends to the dictates of *truth*, it is forcibly urged on in the research of every kind of knowledge, and it becomes habitual to the individual so circumstanced, to think freely and act independently on all questions.

21. Knowledge of truth results from discussion and controversy; it is investigated by the labours and researches of private individuals. Whatever, or whoever, therefore prohibits these, obstructs that industry and that liberty, which it is the common interest and common *right* of mankind to promote.

22. The minds of men, remaining unfettered and unawed by intimidations, those opinions which are founded in maxims of reason and credibility, will gradually prevail, as truth, if left to itself, will almost always obtain the ascendancy.

23. The greatest advantage a people can enjoy, is the liberty of discussing, without controul, all subjects within the range of investigation.

24. Every infringement on the rights of conscience interrupts the benefit of *free inquiry*, and depresses and degrades the human intellect.

25. "Spiritual" submission is unfavourable to mental vigour, and prepares the way for a tame and servile acquiescence in the encroachments of tyrannous authority.

26. "Religious" impositions tend to enfeeble and degrade the intellect. The mind, when bound down by creeds, "Sabbaths," impositions and proscriptions, dares not employ its powerful energies, and thinks feebly on all subjects. Under the dread of "religious" power, the native energies of the mind are depressed and discouraged, and men are rendered incapable of free investigation.

27. "Religious" usurpation is the worst kind of fraud; and before any "government" can accomplish it, it must perform two exploits; it must usurp the "throne" and chain the "slave." In a nation where the observance of "religion" is enforced, a *throne* exists virtually as much as it does in a "kingdom."

28. The project of enforcing religious observances by penal sanctions never originated in the mind of any but a "Theologian."

29. Whoever will be at the trouble of looking into the history of the "Church," will find that the ecclesiastical guardians have been guided by a distinct interest of their own, and most generally contrary to that of the nation. Instead of taking the lead in asserting the rights and promoting the liberties of the citizens, they have been meanly instrumental in nearly all attempts to destroy these invaluable privileges; and instead of propagating generous ideas of freedom, to the widest extent possible, they have generally instilled into the minds of the people slavish maxims, and have inculcated abject submission.

30. Milton wrote,—“The pulpit-stuff of the prelates both first and last, hath been the doctrines and perpetual infusion of servility and content with wretchedness to all their hearers, while their lives have been the type of worldliness and hypocrisy, without the least true pattern of virtue, righteousness or self-denial, in their whole practice.”

31. Milton also describes the priests as “suffering themselves to be common stales, to countenance with their prostituted gravities

every politic fetch, as often as the potent statist pleased to employ them."

32. To select and endow a particular order of men to teach professionally the "duties" of submission, is well fitted to produce slavish subjection. Such ministers being placed in this situation, and considering themselves as allies of the state are under peculiar temptation, on all occasions, to strike in with the measures of those in power; whilst the contrary party are often not only deemed unfit for offices of public usefulness, but are represented as a low and illiterate set, as worthy of being placed in the back ground of society, and even as disaffected and seditious.

33. All penal sanctions in cases of "religion," are persecutions. Before men can persecute, they must have assumed no inconsiderable share of arrogance, and must have renounced the generous dispositions of citizens. No observance of "religious" days can be established without penal impositions, and these imply the existence of a love of dominion over conscience in the imposer, and an abject preference of slavery in the subscriber.

34. To set up "religious" laws and precepts is a task of no difficulty at all—a task to which the greatest fools are competent—a task, indeed, which the foolish are most eager to engage in, for ignorance has no more convenient cloak than arrogance.

35. The talisman of arrogance, ignorance, and indolence, is to be found in a single word, in an authoritative impostor often met with; in the word "*ought*"—"ought," or "*ought not*," as the case may be. By deciding, "*you ought to do this*;" "*you ought not to do it*,"—is not every question set at rest?

36. But there is another word which has a talismanic virtue too, and which might be wielded to destroy many fallacious positions. "*You ought*;" "*you ought not*," says the dogmatist. "*Why!*" retorts the reasoner. "*Why?*"—To say, "*you ought*," is easy in the extreme; to stand the searching penetration of a "*why*" is not so easy.

37. "*Why ought I?*"—"Because you ought," is the not unfrequent reply. On which, the "*why*" comes back again with the added advantage of having obtained a victory.

38. In deciding what is fit to be believed, and commanding what shall be done, by the authoritative "*ought*," there is much profit and little pain; little waste of thought. Observation, enquiry, reflection,—these are all superfluous—as superfluous as they are laborious. Folly, arrogance, the blindest folly, and the most assuming arrogance, find themselves altogether at their ease.

39. All pretension to "authority" over the opinions and Sunday-employments of citizens have something so illiberal and despotic, that, unless the citizens are perfectly stupid and void of reason, they must sink beneath the weight of their own monstrous arrogance and absurdity. These pretensions are directly calculated to exalt the grandeur and extend the dominion of the PRIESTHOOD; to enable

them to enslave the consciences of the stupified community, and prostitute them to the vilest of purposes—*lucre*.

40. The establishment of “religion,” by the civil power, has invariably created a spirit of hostility against those who have resisted the imposition. Every “religious” establishment and enforcement of “religious” observance of days, being a secular institution, not only generates infringement, tyranny, and persecution, but cherishes in the breasts of its members, jealousy of its dominion over others. A dread of *liberty*—of reformation; an attachment to abuses; a fond admiration of splendour, pomp, opulence, and power, of “the Church,” are necessary accompaniments.

41. Outward “consequence” and secularity have always been attached to “Churches;” which are strong inducements to their ministers to defend them, how remote soever from the truth. By these means error, corruption, and injustice, have been permanent, and the vulgar creed which has happened to prevail, has continued, in spite of superior light and improvement, to be handed down *authoritatively* from age to age.

42. What is meant by “*the undoubted principles of religion*,” it would be difficult to say; for such terms mean just any thing any man pleases; they have one meaning in Benares, another in London. “Religion” and “religious worship,” have been in all ages and countries, the notions and habits of superstitious ignorance manœuvred upon by crafty “priesthood.” It may be said to religious devotees of all sects,—“*ye worship ye know not what* ;” and this is the folly of men.

43. Systems of “Theology” have prevailed in one age; in a succeeding period, these have been universally exploded, their absurdity has been detected; other systems have supplied their place, which again have given way to their successors; and nothing has been experienced more liable to the revolutions of accident and fashion than these pretended “revelations from heaven.”

44. When a people claim deliverance from all oppressions and restraints in opinion and day-observance, they display no inconsiderable share of intellectual energy, and thus develope one of the noblest characters of man. The largest share of mental freedom has always had an intimate connexion with a nation’s prosperity.

45. By a due attention to experience and history, we find that to the spirit and sentiment of freedom are we indebted for those improvements in arts and sciences, which have meliorated in so great a degree, the condition of modern society. The middle ages, having been the darkest period of which we have any account, were remarkable for extreme ignorance and “Christian authority;” and for an excessive veneration for received opinions; circumstances which are always united, and which operate on each other as cause and effect. The whole compass of science was, in those times, subject to church-restraint; every free opinion was looked upon as dangerous. In proportion as the world became more enlightened,

this monstrous Church-policy was resisted by society, and at last, having entirely abandoned its controul over the sciences, the authority of the church has taken its last stand on "religion," "Sabbaths," and Bell-sounding-consequence. This was long considered of a nature so peculiarly "sacred," that every attempt to resist its impositions, was denounced as "heresy,"—a crime by far of the greatest magnitude, and punished by *holy-savage* Church-cruelties.

46. Every man may discern, how entirely all that constitutes public and private freedom, happiness, and honour, has been obtained by the conquest and beating-down of political and "religious" tyranny.

47. Physics have been silently, but surely, undermining scholastic metaphysics; fact has pushed aside fancy; knowledge and confidence have driven away mystery and fear; and the light of truth which is streaming from the lamp of experiment—of the matter-of-fact philosophy, is causing the haggard and "awful" phantom of "Religion," that has so long cursed the earth, to stand out in bold relief, while cast upon her pallid face is beheld the hue of death.

48. The "Church of Christ" has been but a powerful corporation full of those sentiments and passions which usually distinguish those bodies. The alliance of "religion" with the civil power has filled the page of history with innumerable crimes shocking to humanity; and the progress of mental emancipation which, if left to itself, would have been calm and silent, is now—alas! traced through rivers of blood.

49. For the effects of systems of "religion" on the morals and interests of the human race, look into the pages of universal history to the present time, and they will be found soddened with human gore, loaded with human groans, and engrossed with records of human suffering.

50. What is "Ecclesiastic History" but the history of the pride and ambition, avarice and tyranny, treachery and cruelty, of the *priest*, and of the sufferings and miseries of his victims?—Victims on account of their sense, knowledge, and efforts to be free. Upon a view of those calamities, what can an unprejudiced person, acquainted with the genuine nature of "religion," think but that it tends to destroy all sentiments of compassion and humanity?

51. No vice, evil, or detriment, has ever sprung from freedom of opinion and non-observance of superstitious ceremonies and Sabbaths. Persecution has always been a source of evil: perfidies, cruelties, and murders, have often been the consequences of intolerance. To suppose a man wicked or immoral, merely on account of any difference of opinion or disregard of "religious" customs, is as foolish as it is absurd; yet this is the principle of "the Church." The dogmas of men in "power," are to be substituted in the room of every other opinion, and *morality*, it is pretended, is most effectually defended and propagated by enforcing a general submission.

52. Persecution always says—"I know the consequences of your opinions, better than you know them yourselves."

53. The horrid and detestable crime of prevention and persecution proceed on the grand fundamental error,—that one man can better judge of the opinions of another, than that other man can judge of them himself.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER V. PART II.

1.

“ ——— ——— ——— ——— ——— You want to lead
My reason blindfold, ——— ——— ——— ——— ———

make it crouch,
And shew strange tricks, which you call signs of faith :
So, silly souls are gull'd, and you get money.”

“ No !—placed in leading-strings, the (crowd) must know
Nor good nor ill, save as their (parsons) show.”

1. Religious darkness has hung round the genius, sagacity, and independence of mankind with an oppressive and bewildering heaviness, from which relief can only be obtained by the energy born of knowledge and a resolute assertion of the rights of human liberty.

2. How vilely was the art of thinking and reasoning abused ! Philosophy was assumed by the priesthood ; corrupted by them, it lent its aid to the spread of error ; perverted to serve their ends, its sole use was the arduous employment of inventing sophistries and subtilities calculated to give the air of probability to absurdities, to render deception plausible, and to fortify chimæras and fables against the attacks of good sense. So that the science, the particular province of which would appear to be the search after truth, guiding to true policy, determining morals, thinking justly, convincing the heart of the necessity for virtue, and furnishing the means of advancing towards perfection,—only served to blind mankind by system ; to render them obstinate in their ignorance, and stubborn in their prejudices ;—in fact, it only served to arm them against the force of reason, and to enable them successfully to repel the light of truths essential to their happiness.

3. The long list of idle tales which are current among the ignorant and superstitious, were planned by the priesthood, to bring philosophy into contempt.

4. The clerical despotism was directly applicable only to points of “ theology,” but as “ religion” was made the standard of morality, and politics was only a portion of morality, all great objects were interdicted, and the human mind, enfeebled and degraded by this interdict, was left with its palsied and cramped faculties to deal only with inferior questions, on condition even then, of keeping out of view every truth capable of being represented as dangerous to any dogma of the established “ church.”

5. It was contrived to connect almost every act of life with “ religious” offices or “ religious” ideas, and the “ church” became the unique source of all social existence.

6. Every instance in which personal experience overturned the authority of professional craft, shook the basis of “ church” power,

and when it was found that truth is not the bond-woman of any clime, sect, or school, but the denizen of every enlightened country and industrious age, the fetters imposed by the "priesthood" began to relax their gripe, and the awakened mind soon disencumbered its degenerated energies. The patriarchal precept once violated with impunity, no longer acted as a talisman upon ignorant credulity.

7. Terrified at the name of innovation, indeed, some timid persons—lovers of ignorance, the kin of darkness, which, like it, lends aid to fear, causing in some situations, the sound of a mouse to harrow with suspense, and conferring on the rumbling of a cart the awe of thunder—are ready to maintain that every "religious" custom now acted was "originally divine."

8. Error has its deepest roots in prejudice, and may be venerated by the ignorant; but truth will release itself from the grasp of prejudice, and the light which it sends forth will dissipate the darkness that obscures the paths to knowledge.

* * * * *

9. It has been the craft of all religions alike, to recommend *humility*. Their universal text hath been,—“Lie down, lie down!” The especial favour of the “God”-thing, whether it were the Jugger-naut of the Ganges, or the blood-propitiated Jehovah of the Jordan, hath been invariably pledged to the mean-spirited, the cringing, sneaking cowards, that would most patiently lay their necks in the mire for “God’s” vicegerents to trample on.

10. The pious affectation of self-abasement is always meant to degrade human nature; a person is “chief of sinners” only by his *nature*.

11. To decry reason and nature is a trick of priestcraft, in order to gain an ascendancy over men’s understandings.

12. The theoretical morality, or “righteousness,” of the saints is so far above concert-pitch, that humanity cannot sustain it in practice, and the result is, “despair of acting up to duty,” a consequent indifference to slight aberrations, and a practice of taking refuge in the pre-eminence of faith, and pronouncing on the “worthlessness and nothingness of all works.”

13. A disorderly and religious imagination, stupified by the trashy phantoms of its own conceit, sets up ideal standards of an unrelative perfection; and thus enthusiasts fall out with themselves for not being what they fancy they ought to be, merely because they have forgotten the limits or the measure of what it is possible to be.

14. The most rigorous sectarians, indeed, are not consistent on this point, but are prone to relaxation in behalf of their own favorite indulgences. Those amongst them, who are “for tenderness framed,” have a patient indulgence for certain weaknesses.

15. Were the precise boundary between innocent and vicious indulgences determined, the morose professors would still continue to make inroads upon the liberty of their more cheerful compatriots, for no other reason than because it is their will and pleasure to do so.

16. Religion is often nothing more than the moody melancholy of an overbearing and tyrannical disposition; and your religious man is nothing more than an usurping saucy knave, who wants to be your master. Having once given *his* mind to religion, the man expects that *your* understanding should submit to *his*; and that you should receive not merely the text *he* quotes, but whatever sense *he* chooses to understand or misunderstand, from it.

17. Some, through the belief of the vanity of human science, think it only necessary to “read their bible.”

18. The anxiety of many people about their “souls,” makes them selfish in all their religion. They deliver their consciences up into some saintly keeping, that their souls may be safe,—and a look or a whisper from the mortal “priest” in whom they have put their trust, disturbs their serenity, and throws them before him almost upon their very knees.

19. Modern religion hardly goes beyond a superstitious veneration for the “sabbath,” and for the ceremonies of the priests.

20. The notions of him who affected to derive his information from “disembodied spirit,” no matter of what degree, would no longer be “discourse of reason;” and out of his spiritual knowledge, duties, or apparent duties, would arise, widely diverging from, and frequently crossing the prescribed and covenanted track of human conduct—abrogating the tacit law of conscience and humanity. Hence crime impelling crime, and a “divine” obduracy rendered the more cruel by the co-existence of unimpaired mental faculties.

21. Surely there is more achieved in furtherance of human happiness by him who labours to give pleasure to human existence, than by him, who, studious of uncomfortable paradoxes, travails to detach mankind from the enjoyment of the stores in possession.

22. The great precepts of morality, which alone it is the duty of society to sanction, are plain, natural, true, and useful—founded alone on our duty to our fellow-men, and their duties to us; precepts which have nothing to do with religion, nor religion with them.

23. For proof of the utter worthlessness of “religion,” scarcely more is wanted than the observation of the character and conduct of its most strenuous professors.

* * * * *

24. In their sophisticated or religious state, few of mankind are possessed with the simple wish of attaining truth in their moral and political enquiries; their strongest wishes are directed to the discovery of new grounds for adhering to opinions already formed; and they are as deaf to arguments on the opposite side as they are alive to representations in favour of their own views.

25. Men’s interests are often indissolubly connected with the prevalence of certain opinions and customs; their pride and personal consequence are implicated in their support; they are pledged by their rank or office, or by their previous declarations, to the main-

tenance of a determinate profession, and they feel, or fear, that it would be a disparagement to their intellectual powers, and to their reputation, were it admitted to be unsound.

26. Leaving penalties out of the question, even temporal emoluments annexed to the profession of any form of religion in such degree as to excite men's avarice and ambition, and dispose them to mean and unworthy compliances to obtain or secure them, have done incalculable mischiefs to the moral characters of multitudes.

27. There are several pretexts, mean and ignorant subterfuges, employed for the evading of the duty of inquiry. "Inquiry might lead to doubt or perplexity;"—"to become acquainted with opposite arguments, might shake the settled convictions of the understanding;"—"to read the writings of adversaries might contaminate the mind," &c. &c.

28. One impediment to inquiry is a fear that we may search too far, and be guilty of presumption in prying into things we ought not to know. Another prejudice is, that we may contract guilt should we arrive at conclusions at variance with the notions that are established; and another, that it is a sort of praise-worthy *humility* to acquiesce in received opinions, to rely on the authority of others, and to refrain from thinking, or not to presume to think, for ourselves.

29. No one who has the means and opportunity of inquiry on subjects which have an important bearing on his moral motives of action, or conduct in society, ought to be satisfied with his opinions on those subjects, much less ought he to inculcate them on others, unless he can trace their connection with self-evident principles.

30. No instruction can be more important than that which has for its object the training of the mind to judge correctly of moral evidence, in guiding the actions of life, and in regulating our opinions on the most interesting points. It is from the want of this instruction, or from not profiting by it as it is given, that, under the form of eloquence, so much inanity solicits our applause, and that under the appearance of truth, such tortuous errors, hooding themselves under a specious name, are every day adopted.

31. Those who shrink from investigation, lest they should mistake false for true, can have no reason for supposing themselves free from that delusion in their actual opinions. That they should be the more likely to escape from error without, than with investigation, is a species of absurdity which requires no exposure.

32. Whoever fears to examine the foundation of his opinions, or to enter on the consideration of any train of counter-argument, may rest assured that he has some latent apprehension of their unsoundness, and of their incapacity of standing investigation.

33. Investigation is a pursuit in which there is every thing to hope and nothing to fear; and to which there are no limits but such as the nature of our own faculties prescribes.

34. There are no secrets in the natural or moral world sacred from the investigation of men; here there can be no presumption, no audacity, no undue boldness: there are no forbidden truths.

35. Truth is conducive to human happiness; the attainment of it is one of the highest objects of human enterprise; and the free exercise of our faculties on all subjects, is the means of securing this invaluable knowledge.

36. A simple and sincere desire to arrive at the truth, without any predilection in favor of any opinion whatever, and without any other disturbing feeling of affection, of dislike, or hope, or fear, is the moral state of mind most favorable to the success of inquiry.

37. He whose desires are directed solely to the attainment of correct views, will naturally search for information wherever it is likely to present itself; he will be without motive for partiality, and susceptible of the full force of evidence.

38. The most glaring phenomenon attendant on the objections to inquiry is, that the objections which are good at Notre Dame are equally good at Constantinople, and yet the things defended are not the same. Since, therefore, it is not a common truth, it must be a common interest: there are certain comfortable possessions and personal affections dependent on the supporting a particular state of belief; the orthodox are every where the orthodox.

39. Orthodox education has no other object but to foster prejudices and to inculcate intolerance.

40. Religion has no occasion for evidence at all; religious minds have the evidence in themselves; "the spirit of god bears witness with their spirits:" thus the matter of faith is settled with a degree of conviction that renders reason superfluous and inquiry sinful. Passionate affirmations of its all-sufficiency, are all that the advocates of religion can say in reply to the conscientious reasoner.

41. A few emphatic words about "providence," "god's right arm," and he who said this, and pronounced that, are expected to settle every religious question.

42. The meanest trait in the mental character of the fanatical adherents to religion, is their avowed determination to abide by its tenets whether true or false, and their revolting from the duty of *free inquiry*. They hug their illusion, and each exclaims,—“well! if it be error—sweet, sweet error! May I never know the truth!” Thus they barricade themselves against the invasion of a rational idea.

“ — — — Faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast,
To some dear falsehood hugs it to the last.”

43. The advocates of religion scarcely contend any longer for its truth; they merely insist on its consolations.

44. So shameful bigotry must necessarily separate the devotee from the reasoner. What sympathy can exist between those who delight in truth, and whose happiness is liberty, and those who cling to their mental vices, and who would willingly lend their aid to enforce a general submission to church-authority? No confidence can be placed in the professions of those who are so wanting in sincerity and honour, as to pretend a regard for truth, but who actually hug their prejudices, and refuse to listen to others' reasons for justifying them in entertaining different opinions.

45. Ignorance is the enemy of all improvement. While men have no desire to emancipate themselves from her slavery, they despise and oppose all that tends to enlighten the mind.

46. The ignorant who just tread in the track of vulgar custom, and are subjected to vulgar prejudices, always resort to condemnatory exclamations against those who have advanced further in the science of points either political or moral than themselves, and they fiercely denounce those who innovate at all on the habitual ideas or on the revered despotism of the country they belong to. 'Tis the strife of the chained slaves of the priesthood against the free and independent class of society that has obtained an insight into the imposture of their craft.

47. Conviction respecting the most obvious truths, must be expected to make but a slow progress among a people who are the slaves of custom, and whose want of curiosity and courage, and whose indifference, are such as to prevent their advancement in any kind of knowledge, or into the advantages of any improvement proposed to them, and which operate so powerfully as to keep them in a state of stupid contentment with their present ignorant and miserable subserviency.

48. It is unjust to tie down manhood to those tenets which have been ingenuously avowed, but perhaps hastily adopted in youth. It is unjust to shackle men with any other restraints than those which are necessary for the observance of decorum, honor, and the strictest fidelity. It is unjust to debar any human being from the moral or intellectual benefits which may arise from greater accuracy of information or greater maturity of judgment. It is flagrantly unjust to blame men for discharging their new duties, which are really imposed on their consciences by new and disinterested views of controverted and important questions.

2.

1. The people had been so long in the habit of believing christianity to be true, that the mind seemed to have lost all traces of independent investigation; a mental stupidity had taken possession of the human faculties, and liberal inquiry was lost in the vortex of clerical authority.

2. The priests, who take every advantage to increase their influence, usurped the monopoly of science and art, and these they transformed into superstition and quackery.

3. By deprecating science, and requiring implicit faith in the most wretched and absurd doctrines and legends, all discrimination of truth and record, all the sources of history and philosophy, all power and wish to correct error however gross, were effectually destroyed, and the faculties of the mind were laid waste and crushed beneath the "holy" hand of ecclesiastical tyranny.

4. The church was hostile to every plan of study or mode of investigation which the "church" had not sanctioned; the people had almost universally surrendered their understandings to the controul of a body of priests, who reduced "spiritual" tyranny and delusion to a complete system.

5. The countries where sacerdotal instruction alone is permitted, remain in ignorance, superstition, and slavery.

6. What priests are paid to teach, is directly opposed to the natural practice of all rational and free men. They preach "contentment" with the social condition, how miserable soever it may be, endurance to the destitute, and submission to the oppressed;—they teach contentment with poverty and rags, with privations and sufferings,—while the great, the universal practice of the priest himself is to improve his present condition, to increase his wealth, comforts, and luxuries. The dignitaries of the "church" preach *poverty*, and wallow in wealth; they slumber in a voluptuousness which knows no wants.

7. In treating of morals, it has been the practice to speak of man's *duty* and nothing more. Pompous dogmas are poured forth from a cushioned desk about "duty" and "duties," while not a word is dropped from the man in black about men's interests and enjoyments.

8. In nothing do the priests injure the people more than by inculcating the pestiferous doctrine, that privation and poverty are favourable to *virtue*—that endurance and submission are *virtues*. This doctrine of the necessity of "worldly" privations—sacrifice and suffering—in order to ensure "eternal life," is at once the most absurd, the most mischievous, that ever was imposed. "Clergymen" teach mankind to forego their most pleasing duties, to hate this goodly existence, to suppress all the warm desires of the passions, and to sacrifice "this life" for "the life which is to come." For ages have the priests been teaching the poor to remain *contented* "in that *station* of life," as they say, "to which it hath pleased God to call them." Can any but a priest-enslaved public put the two facts in juxta-position, the preaching such absurd doctrines and the reaching so intently after the possession of wealth and its attendant influence by the preachers, without being instantly convinced that they have had their effect, and that actually the elevation and power of the priesthood have tended to debase and vitiate the people.

9. The priesthood, rendered an organized and disciplined body constitute the rare union of an absolute despotism, and a willing, because interested, slavery—a condition of Society to be found only among men leagued against the interests of humanity.

10. The "church" has ever been the ally of despotism, the patron of abuse, the relentless persecutor of all, who, eschewing the ecclesiastical spirit, have put themselves forward from age to age, to benefit society or enlighten their fellow-men. Our own times are pregnant with proofs of clerical animosity to truth and freedom, and affection for ignorance and despotic power.

11. When "religion" becomes a trade, then it becomes an entire and direful curse. If we consider the history of the "church," we discover it to be a system of fraud and oppression in the highest degree detrimental to the welfare of mankind, and calculated to perpetuate delusion and to subject men to the interests of a mercenary class.

12. The term "*class*" is not applicable to the people. A mere difference of condition should not be considered as placing a man in a lower or higher class. In its proper meaning, this word can only apply to those who are in possession of some profession, privilege, or mischievous power over a portion, greater or less, of the community. A class, therefore, is a beneficial order, and the three classes in society distinguishable from the citizens in general, are the privileged, the assumers of aristocracy, and the clergy.

13. Of all classes, those are the most odious, who have made it their "sanctified and holy" office to practice on the mental associations connected with the fears and weakness resulting from the ignorance and stupidity of men.

14. In the "church," the knowledge and power of those who "govern" and profit are reared securely on the ignorance, the feebleness, and the devotedness of those who submit to be "governed" and to pay.

15. In every country, the same motives of interest, and the same arts, have combined to furnish sacerdotal bodies with the same means to impose on the people; and in every country the priests have made use of them.

16. The several kinds of superstition alike serve as footstools to ecclesiastical pride and church plunder.

17. "Unearthly" terror, "religious" awe, is the great engine for subduing the mind. Bishop Burnet advised and commanded the clergy, to preach the doctrine of the *eternity of hell-torments*, though *they knew it be a lie*; because the people must be frightened, as fear alone could tame the "*people*" into submission, and make them the slaves and cowards that 'tis most convenient to their "betters" that they should be.

18. The "clergy" have invented a name for their especial use and craft: it is "*love of the church*." This means, subserviency and zeal in promoting the interests of the class—of the wealth, power, and dignity of the clerical class.

19. A historical sketch of church-politics is adapted, above all other inquiries, to instruct and caution mankind. Nothing in the annals of the world present so extraordinary a fact, as that of a set of knaves, *preaching* the doctrines of self-denial, humility, and contempt of all "worldly" good,—so far imposing upon men as to make those very doctrines the means of amassing together all they so expressly disclaimed.

20. The machinery of a church united to the state—its dogmas and ceremonies protected and upheld by the state-authorities—must

of necessity tend to solemn deceptions; and it is a homely saying containing much truth, that *solemnity and humbug are twin-brothers*. Hall has designated that mystery of iniquity, the monstrous alliance between "church" and "state," as a compact between the priest and the magistrate to betray the liberties of mankind.

21. "RELIGION" is made a theatrical solemnity, or hebdomadary ceremony, that must by no means be dispensed with. "If you go to church, you will go to heaven," is hinted in many a sermon and many a tract. Church-going and religion are synonymous. Hence, the nervous anxiety exhibited by the "clergy" to see their churches filled; hence, the unceasing prating about the virtue of going to church; hence, the steady church-going of official men; hence, the decorous "taking-of-the-sacrament;" hence, the bell-uproar as a prescriptive means of sounding aloud the church-consequence; and hence, the holy spite vituperated against all non-church-goers.

22. The world has at last discovered the meaning of the word, "*blasphemy*." The Quarterly Review says:—"When I say you blaspheme, I mean, you attack my opinions (or preachings)." This is satisfactory, and brings back the word to its original meaning. Demosthenes accused Æschines of blaspheming him.

23. Nothing is more indeterminate than the signification of the word, "*impious*," to which it has been contrived that the ignorant should annex a vague, confused, idea of villany.

24. The first object proposed by the "church," is, by all sorts of artifice, but particularly by the vulgar application of unmeaning, but stigmatising words, to prevent the freedom of mind which would lead to a critical examination of every dogma, the absurdity of which they know to be palpable when brought out of their fearful darkness and presented in the slightest gleam of moral light.

25. Those who hang on their faith, are taught to believe that doubt or inquiry is the road to "death," or rather to "eternal *hell-torments*."

26. Woman, especially, of whom feebleness and timidity are educational characteristics, is ever brought most completely under the influence of the priest.

27. The priesthood obtain the confidence of the sex: they know that its ill-trained feelings are easily influenced, its ignorant imagination easily excited, its gaping credulity easily crammed, and its consequent weakness easily subdued.

28. Women are taught to make it a virtue not to enter into deep reasonings, so that they adhere to their catechism, and are much inclined to superstition. They become great followers of ceremonies and sermons, and are so much possessed with the crowd of minor passions which fall to their lot, that they seldom have capacity to call in question the articles of their "faith." They are more quick in discovering the secret of reconciling passion and "religion" together, than in the adoption of good sense or unbelief.

29. Women, from their more sedentary habits, are apt to be

affected by *tædium*. The priests take advantage of this circumstance. They get up religious ceremonies, which occupy their imaginations before hand, and the “solemnity” furnishes conversation for weeks afterwards.

30. There is scarcely a man who has not a thousand associations, a thousand relations, with society. In proportion, therefore, as “religious” respect for, and confidence in, the priest extends and this domestic conspiracy is ramified,—is every member of society surrounded by its snares, even in the utmost privacy, and escape from it rendered the less possible. Domestics, children, wives, are gradually proselytized, and toleration of their religious practices and connexions is instantly made the contrivance for their and your subjugation.

31. “The withering fascination,” saith a *reverend* renouncer of the church, “poured first upon the ear of unresisting infancy, like the mildewed air, doth blight the germ of reason, and doth inflict a palsy so grievous, so perpetual, as never more to permit the mind to grow up to the acquisition of its natural functions, and millions, who have been called *rational*, have stolen their way from the cradle to the grave, with the sound of ‘*thus saith the Lord*’ forever in their ears, without having had sense or curiosity enough freely to ask the question, ‘*who is the Lord!*’”

32. Habits and prejudices, too, in established states, yield with the stiffest reluctance to the demands of reason and justice.

33. The delusions, often of self-love, and the magnified proportions of the warm objects of attachment and intercourse, shut out the perception of what is more remote, and produce a perverse partiality even of the understanding itself.

34. The sentiments entertained are, to a considerable degree, at the disposal of enticements on the one side, and of menaces and apprehension on the other. That which a man wishes to believe he is already greatly in progress to embrace; and that which will bring disgrace and calamity, he is more than half-prepared to reject.

35. Even where there is no ground for suppressing or perverting the truth, there are many persons who speak and write according to the side or sect they have espoused, or to the inclinations and predilections of those by whom they are likely to be read or heard, and that at length persuade themselves there is a sort of impropriety in presenting facts in their proper colours.

36. It is *wilfully* persisting in *prejudice*, that renders the evil of error the more difficult of cure. It would be no disgrace to men to be deceived involuntarily, how can they secure themselves from being so? most who surround them, study to deceive them.

37. Can the listening to men with “*God*” forever in their mouths, and their pockets forever in their hearts—to men who think of nothing but the aggrandizement of their temporal distinction, and who screen, under the most revolting affectation of a concern in “spirituality,” cupidity after earthly eminence and command;—can the creeds of

all the priests that ever existed, though connected with, or aiming at the forming of a connection with the state, in hopes of extending their influence by that connection, have any influence over honest men who have freely reasoned?

38. The name of "Churchman" has begun to pass current in our language as a synonyme, sometimes for a bigot, sometimes for an extortioner, sometimes for an overbearing tyrant, sometimes for a crouching and supple slave, sometimes for a compound of all these base and odious characters.

39. In the words of Drummond,—“Philosophy, wisdom, and liberty, support each other; he, who will not reason, is a bigot; he, who cannot, is a fool; and he, who dares not, is a slave.”

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER VI. PART II.

1.

“Oh! why has priesthood privilege to lie,
And yet to be believed?”
“— Why seek we truth from priests?”

1. The priests have drawn large drafts upon the credulity of the public, and with a degree of audacity which nothing but a calculation of impunity, founded on its presumed ignorance, could have generated.

2. The most dangerous of all power is a power in “religion,” because it is capable of the greatest perversion, and is attended with the most fatal consequences. In the hands of ecclesiastics, power will always preponderate on *their* side, until it leaves nothing on the side of the people but mere form. A power pretended to be from “God,” naturally overpowers the conscience, and renders an appeal to any other tribunal impossible; and thus our understandings are abused, our moral powers are rendered incapable of every exertion, and a door is opened for every imposition.

3. Creeds have done more to perpetuate ignorance and slavery than any human institution has ever effected. By prohibiting change, they shut the door against all advancement. The nations that have adopted them have condemned themselves to remain stationary amid a progressive world, and to be thus stationary is to be retrograde.

4. Wherever a sovereign priesthood has succeeded in its object of crushing the efforts of reason, and has determined by its dogmas what shall be true and right, and what false and “sinful,” and thus submitted to the despotic and chilling authority of the “law” the honest convictions of reason, the warm and generous impulses of the heart, and the noble struggles of the will, then the people have sunk into a state of torpor and darkness from which it would scarcely be possible for them to awaken to a sense of the light of knowledge, or arouse them to an assertion of their liberties.

5. The readiest instrument of political degradation is an established priesthood.

6. The wide extent of superstition among us affords a humiliating subject of reflection, and it is a striking proof of the tyrannical influence of custom on the mind.

7. The worst species of slavery is that endured under a theocracy maintained by the artfully-managed influence of a pay-receiving, scheming, and ambitious priesthood over the prejudices of a blind, ignorant, and bigoted community.

8. Happy are the states that confine the magistrate to civil affairs, and let religion wholly alone.

9. Wherever "religion" has been "established by law," reformation has always been punished as crime.

10. No "religion" can be "established" without penal sanctions, and all penal sanctions, in cases of "religion," are persecutions.

11. Coercive measures reach not the mind; and the issuing of edicts to extort assent to speculative tenets is the bombast of civil authority.

12. Truth rests on evidence. Coercion, though it may form habits and prejudices, never forms principles, the only security for the observance of duties.

13. The attempt to establish an uniform belief in a "God" by the coercive power of the magistrate, is as impotent as it is unjust and oppressive. It may produce a set of pliant hypocrites; it may tear asunder all the pleasant ties of society; it may operate to the establishing of ignorance and the most abased superstitions; but it is utterly incapable of working one honest conviction in the heart of man.

14. When the persecuting "laws" are become privileges to the persecutors, it is extremely difficult to abolish them. Cupidity for a long time shelters itself under the mask of "religion."

15. All governments and all ordinances which forbid their own examination and criticism do, *ipso facto*, acknowledge their injustice. Priests, ministers, and magistrates, who prohibit all questions on the creeds they establish, do, by the prohibition, confess that they are tyrants or impostors.

16. From the Egyptian priest, who reserved the three great earthly advantages to himself and his order—namely, rule, knowledge, and wealth, leaving slavery, ignorance, and poverty to the people—from him down to the clergy of the American Theocracy, who adopt the Egyptian principle, and enforce their "Sabbath" and their test-oath in courts of law upon the citizens—"Religion" has been the same—selfish, intolerant, narrowing knowledge, the friend of tyranny, the destroyer of liberty.

17. To make "Christianity" a constitutive part of our political system is fatal to republican liberty. The popular religious prejudices are fatal to republican liberty when a villanous executive, espousing the cause of the sacerdotal order, takes advantage of them to oppress that portion of the community who are adverse to the observance, by

themselves, of superstitious days and superstitious formalities, and who are outlawed through the imposition of Bible-oaths.

18. The strong arm of the law has been made use of to compel a remission from business, which, if not voluntary, must be mischievous.

19. A body of men who are forced, in following the pure dictates of conscience, to renounce the civil advantages enjoyed by their fellow-citizens, are not in possession of republican rights.

20. Though our judges no longer, like Sir Matthew Hale, fall upon their knees after condemning an old woman to be burnt alive for "witchcraft," and thank God that they have not departed from the "approved wisdom and venerable institutions of their ancestors," yet they content themselves with applying the same phraseology to other abuses equally inhuman, and alike destined to correction in the progress of light and justice.

21. In a century hence the didactic literature, the general opinions, the political and industrial institutions of the present age, will appear in a state of Gothic aberration from the dictates of reason when enlightened by a correct knowledge of nature and morals.

22. Theocracy must be overthrown, and a priest-fostering executive be revolutionized, before men can be said to have established themselves as a republic.

23. President John Adams wrote :—"My ideas of the right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience, both in religion and philosophy, are limited only by morals and propriety. This country has much to do ; I wish it may annul every narrow idea in religion, government, and commerce."

24. We resign to civil society our natural right of self-defence only on condition that the ordinances of law should protect our just liberties—freedom in philosophizing, and freedom from every political restraint which necessity does not justify.

25. In every free state there are some liberties and privileges which the individuals of society cannot give out of their own hands, not even to the legislature.

26. Laws have nothing to do with mere opinions, nor with the consecration of particular days to the observance of "religious" rites, but only with those overt acts which are contrary to the peace and safety of society.

27. Legislation has nothing to do with man, his nature, and his destiny, except as a member of society.

28. Justice, identified with the happiness of the millions, listens to no sectarian feeling—pursues no partial interest.

29. Let us hope the time will soon come when law will consist, as Bossuet finely said, of what the reason of every individual will approve.

30. One great object of a designing priesthood and ruling church is to render the minds of ignorant bigots, their creatures, inveterate in their malignance towards the reasoner.

31. Deep-laid schemes are widely diffused by which the ravings of

fanaticism, the maudlin sensibility of half-bred ignorance, and even the weakness of senility and passion of womanhood, have been enlisted to perpetuate a system of unprincipled and sanctified imposture.

32. "Let us," say these "godly" conspirators against human rights—"let us improve the advantages given us by the subversion of republican liberty in the judicial courts, where fines for *Sabbath-breaking* and test-oaths coerce the individual, and establish or make dominant the Christian religion, in violation of the constitutional declaration of mental independence, and the right of exercising reason unshackled by religious trammels; let us raise the church above the constitution, and establish a Theocracy instead of a republic; let us seize the power which has been swayed by the clergy of other countries; let us recal the darkness which fatal light—the flame of intelligence—has partially dissipated and so rendered men averse to slavery; let us fill their minds with vain and chimerical dreams; let us revive those pious frauds which our predecessors found so serviceable in the barbarous ages; let us make the same imperious demand for the prostration of the people's understandings before us; let us, in our sermons, feign or forge the most weak and ridiculous notions and represent them as the arguments of the reasoning adversary, and thus the dupes who hear us will testify to our having knocked them down like nine-pins; let us scruple at no lies and misrepresentations to blacken the characters of our opposers, while the sacredness of our pulpit and calling will protect us; let our protracted orgies confound and distract the senses of our congregations; let us point *them* to the good things of heaven, that *we* may get into our possession the *good* things of the earth; let us astonish the ignorant and credulous multitude with mysterious objects and doctrines, with astounding images of hell and heaven, devil and god; let us by means of collections amassed from the pious erect the most splendid and imposing edifices and place loud-sounding bells in their highest lofts, in order that the public may be accustomed to our clamour and acknowledge our consequence; let us fill the schools with orthodox masters and books only; let us set the fashion, and support the patronage of orthodox authors and editors only; let us make dupes and bigots of the people, and by their folly and prejudices let us become the arbiters of the American States."

33. With what horror and shame should our citizens contemplate the corporation of fraudulent priests, who would make the laws subservient to their professional ambition and cupidity, and convert the civil magistrate into their executioner!

34. Priests see no chance of propping what they call "their right," that is, their church-craft and professional emoluments, but by affecting to bewail over the loss of the people's "instinctive belief" in that which "*is not*"—and they seem to consider nothing harmless but what consists of falsehood.

35. There is hope, however, to be derived from the humanizing effects of literature which has now begun to act upon our citizens.

36. There is, in truth, no more fatal symptom for the complex system of ignorance and wrong which appears to be just now tottering to its decease, than the impossibility under which the enemy has labored, of preventing the advance of knowledge into the very fortresses of his own strength.

37. Implicit faith is well-nigh destroyed ; and that belief alone is adapted to withstand the stir and strife of opinions, which rests upon evidence.

38. The informed reason will never again be capable of settling down into that stupid, state of easy acquiescence and reposing credulity which alone gave security and safety to the reign of professional superstition.

“ ————from the lips of truth one mighty breath
Shall, like a whirlwind, scatter in its breeze
The whole dark pile of human mockeries.”

39. The present is a reasoning age ; and it is not by defamation, by the nod of authority, nor by the thunder of “ anathemas,” but by arguments addressed to the judgment and the understanding, that men can be convinced.

40. Puerile superstitions have been mortally wounded by the torch of reason, and the light artillery of ridicule.

41. The mighty stream of truth that flows from the fountains of sensible knowledge, is destined to vivify and benefit mankind through succeeding ages.

42. A vast and momentuous moral crisis is rapidly approaching—the rise of education throughout the mass of the people. Amidst pretensions to sensible “ spiritual” communion on the one hand, and a careful avoidance of recognizing any thing like “ divine ” interposition on the other—a large portion of the community, which had been hitherto uneducated, is suddenly roused into free inquiry, and furnished with ability to perceive all that darkens and deforms the subject.

43. The interested priest and the depraved bigot may deprecate the increase and spread of intellectual culture, which they cannot effectually repress, and may look back with vain regret on the ages of stupid rudeness and torpid ignorance which they cannot recal ; while on the other hand, those whose views are more cheerful and enlightened will hail with joy every symptom of any kind of advancement in science and every kind of political reform.

44. The period is coming when names will no longer rule, and ancient forms no longer fetter the expanding intellect of the country ; the principles of all institutions will be investigated, and those which are founded in fallacy and imposition will be exposed and removed. So soon as enlightened reason shall have expelled blind prejudice from our minds, every relic of blundering and mischievous legislation will be cleared away, and then the era of our moral and political exaltation will commence, our liberties will be unimpeded, and we shall indeed, be Republicans.

45. Those graduated in the professional art of enriching themselves and exercising a dominion over the public mass by means of their fears, their ignorance, and their superstitious credulity, behold, with alarm, the spirit of enquiry, of independence, and of improvement, pressing forward into action on all sides; and sorely do they dread the results of the vast accumulation of knowledge produced and disseminated among our citizens.

46. The informed mind has at length asserted its rightful, native, freedom, and shaken off the yoke of priests' authority; despising the servile prejudice of yielding implicit deference to the decisions of a professional order,—many have determined, by the vigorous and independent exertions of their faculties, to investigate the certain and universal principles of nature, and upon this foundation to frame their opinions of truth.

47. The physical sciences have opened to us the great roll of nature and, at its display, the speculations of the schools have fled; all clouds of mysticism have dispersed, and our horizon is left bright and extended. The mind attains an exactness, a certainty, that fits it for practical pursuits; its knowledge is conscience and principle. We enter upon our duties with clear vision; we follow the plain track of nature, and make its eternal and unalterable order the test of our opinions. We take nothing on authority, nothing on "faith." The truth is, in all things, found to be in strict connection with universal nature, the knowledge of which constitutes all science—and which knowledge alone can operate in meliorating the human condition. Materialism is nature and morality; spiritualism is imposture and superstition.

48. There is found to be no mystery in nature; its attributes of infinity and eternity are perceived to be *necessary* and not mysterious; nor is the difficulty greater in acknowledging the *fact* of the infinitely universal and necessarily eternal mode of existence, than in comprehending and admitting the most palpable and well-defined process of any other of the pure representations of sense and moral conclusion.

49. The spell, through which the community were wont to be led, is broken. Mere black-gowns, consecrated stone-and-mortar, and pilfering mummeries, will no longer lead the country; their general domination exists no more.

50. The aristocracy of profession and ceremony is falling.

51. The humble member of society discovers to his astonishment, that those before whom all bowed in reverence, are grossly ignorant on matters perfectly familiar to himself; he hears them assert that to be truth, which he knows from demonstration, to be fiction; he sees them reign by means of pretences and assumptions which he can prove to be erroneous: the charm of sounds, and the imposing authority of forms, are vanished—and the reign of trust is passed.

52. Prejudice, bigotry, and malice, and, above all, interest, may oppose the progress of intelligence; they may persevere; they may vaunt of their omniscience and infallibility; they may vociferate from

pulpits that wrong is right and right is wrong, that falsehood is truth and truth falsehood; they may cover all who oppose them with slander and obloquy; they may be puffed to their hearts' content by the venal press; but the issue will be shame and contempt towards themselves in the eyes of the intelligent, the upright, and the independent.

53. We appeal to those whose party is their country; whose bosoms glow with the sacred flame of integrity and honor; who disregarding opinion and theory, follow fact and experience, and read the page of nature for information regarding its truths—to those, to whom the freedom and happiness of their country is as dear as the dearest of their personal possessions—to such is our appeal an irresistible summons to the discharge of the highest of their duties—the patriotic espousal of the cause of reason, justice and liberty.

54. Let every manly and just heart set itself vigorously to the accomplishment of its object, in rending the veil of superstitious ignorance which the artful priesthood have drawn over the country.

55. All the artificial attempts to enfeeble and degrade the human mind, invigorated as it is by science, and arrived at mature knowledge—and to force it to resume those swaddling-bands which it has thrown aside, will henceforth prove unavailing.

“ The mighty palace of the sky,
In ruin fallen, is doomed to lie;
And all the “ Gods ” its wreck beneath,
Shall sink in chaos and in death.”

2.

1. How long have mankind been in learning the respect which they owe to the individual liberty of opinion, speaking and writing? Is this respect properly understood even at present? Have politicians duly learned the regard which is due to the moral liberty?

2. The fundamental objects of all civil society are, or ought to be to promote the general safety and welfare. The civil office consists in the exercise of such delegated powers as are necessary for the protection and well-being of the whole community. Civil liberty consists in not being restrained by any “ laws,” so mis-called, as are not conducive to the public welfare.

3. We see “ Governments ” existing in which these objects are but imperfectly obtained, and we ask ourselves, “ *why are they not changed?* ”

4. There are reasons which may help us to a just understanding of the facts, and enable us to solve the inquiry, how it should happen that society should fail of attaining the very objects on which it is founded and yet the “ government ” be supported, if not by the acquiescence, by the submission or toleration, of the public.

5. In every “ government,” the multitude obey from mere custom, or the habit of obedience, and from an indolent indisposition to con-

template any thing otherwise than it at present exists. They do not consider whether it might be made better or not. They are content, from mere *vis inertiae*, to let things remain as they are

6. Some persons are often persuaded to acquiescence by the consciousness of their own inability to procure suitable changes; by the dread of popular commotions; by doubts as to the possibility of curing existing evils; and by the apprehension, that, in many instances, the system of "government" has become so interwoven with the habits and institutions of the people, that much mischief might be sustained in the process of obtaining reform.

7. Many persons have a direct and positive interest in preserving the "government" as it is, and even in perpetuating its very corruptions. The interests of classes, too, involved in the present organization of the state, and combined in the structure of the "government" present a formidable barrier to a just change. One might be led to suppose that the object of "government" was to maintain the interests of the clergy, rather than to secure the general welfare of the "people."

8. If the influential class be the "educated" and the wealthy, and certain "high" family names hold prescriptive consequence, and succeed, of course, to office and "power;" if the priesthood be fostered by the "government," and enjoy "legal" patronage,—it is easy to perceive that there is immense difficulty in introducing any fundamental and salutary change, which could scarcely take place but upon some stout resistance to oppression, which would affect particular interests and break down exclusive advantages.

9. Unless the laws and institutions of society be consistent with individual freedom, or natural right, they will be found to be altogether oppressive, and inconsistent with civil justice. Under the pretence of "government," the liberties of men have universally been infringed in points where they ought to be left as free as the air that is breathed.

10. The rights of the people are not to be claimed as mere prescriptive rights; they do not require to be proved like the title-deeds of an estate; they are, like breathing, the natural indefeasible birth-right of man, his inalienable right to enjoy his own opinions free from the oppression of those in whose hands, for his own sake, he is contented to place executive power.

11. Mental freedom being the natural and absolute right of every rational being,—it will follow as a direct consequence, that all the "decrees of councils," "acts of legislation," "canons of convocation," opinions of "lawyers," that "Christianity forms part and parcel of the law of the land," with all the commands and constitutions of every body of men requiring "religious" obedience, are manifestly founded in injustice and oppression.

12. If a man demean himself as a peaceful and useful citizen, what has the civil power to do with his opinions, or with his practices that are but merely irreligious, *i. e.*, not subservient to the purposes of the priesthood by an observance of ceremonial days?

13. Ecclesiastical persons are continually sounding alarm, and calling upon the legislature to interfere. The safety of "religion," then—of the "church,"—rests on the civil privations of a portion of the community. It is necessary that those privations and incapacities should remain, though a disgrace to our country, as a shield of protection to the consequence and power of the "church."

14. To the disgrace, too, of the modern understanding, "magistrates" are found at the present day, who do not blush at being the vile instruments of priestly vindictiveness, church-tyranny, and bell-religion.

15. A "tribunal" which can disfranchise reason, and make conscience illegal, is an unwarrantable engine of "government."

16. Is it not equally marvellous as it is absurd, that any class should ever have succeeded in investing the magistrate with "power," in those things which do not at all concern the state, but merely subserve a "religious" end? This is the power of punishing or proscribing a man for the mere non-observance of religious ceremonies and Sabbaths.

17. To allow the "magistrate" the power of scrutinizing the opinions of the citizens, and of punishing them for assumed "religious" delinquency, is not only investing him with an unlimited power of oppression liable to the most extravagant abuse, but it is openly surrendering on the people's part, the independence of reason, the decisions of judgment, and the dictates of conscience.

18. Among the many inconveniences of allowing priests to have any power, is, that being obliged to maintain some fixed opinions, they consider those who differ from them personal as well as public enemies; and the more bitter enemies, the stronger the reasons with which these opponents assail them.

19. That religious or irreligious sentiments are not under the controul of "laws," and not to be restrained by penalties, appears from the absurd and ruinous consequences that would follow. If the "magistrates" establish any religion, it will certainly be the religion of an influential class, and if they assume the power to suppress any opinions, they will of course be induced to suppress those which are condemned as adverse to those of the "clergy." But who made these men the judges of truth and error?

20. The awful fact has indeed been revealed by melancholy experience,—religion, bigotry, was never amiable, reasonable, or otherwise than odiously tyrannical; yet would it be comparatively harmless as existing in individuals destitute of power, or who acted not by any combined influence or authority. The unnatural interference of "state" in its favour, gives the sting to this intolerant and baneful temper, and from the evils of making "laws" for conscience and executing them, have proceeded all the persecutions, imprisonings, mulctings, and murderings, on account of the mere avowal of dissent from established "religion," or disregard of the ceremonies and days sacred to religion, that have been perpetuated by papists, episcopa-

lians, and presbyterians; and surely it is high time that all such irrational, impolitic, and inhuman violence were banished from states that self-call themselves *free*.

21. The "authority" of the "magistrate can, with justice, punish none but open criminals against the state. For his opinions, and for his non-observance of religious ceremonies and days, a citizen is not accountable to the state. All enactments in "religion," whether popish or protestant, episcopal or presbyterian, methodistical or congregational, are unjust and oppressive usurpations over the rights of men.

22. If every man have perfect liberty to approve or reject the vulgar doctrines, and to observe or disregard the forms of "worship," and observances of "holy-sabbaths," as they appear conformable or discordant to his views, without suffering the least inconvenience or privation on that account,—*this* is the indisputable *right* of private judgment and unfettered liberty of conscience and conduct, naturally possessed by every man.

23. If men were conscious of freedom being their inherent personal property, inseparable from their very existence, and their natural and inalienable birthright; if they would make a proper use and improvement of this right in their researches after truth; if they would proceed in all enquiries with unbiassed impartiality, and would not be misled by corrupt passions, perverted by bigotry, enslaved by education, nor controuled by the terrors of oppressive "authority,"—such open ingenuity of mind, such cool and unfettered faculties of examination, would be attended with distinguished advantages to themselves, and would greatly promote the ends of social happiness.

24. The natural influence of truth upon the mind cannot be counteracted by sufferings; nor can the operations of conscience be governed by methods of coercion. Torture, or even penalties of an inferior description, may make men hypocrites,—but they can never make them sincere believers in another's creed, nor force them to relinquish their own. By oppression, a man's assent to the proposition may be demanded, that the product of ten multiplied by five, would be forty; but his conviction that the true product amounts to fifty, must remain immutable in his own breast, though, in violation of truth, he might yield to the tyrannical will of him who might have it in his power to require the former assent. It is exactly thus in all matters of coercion in "religion" and conscience.

25. Penalties, in all cases of "religion," are absolutely inapplicable and impertinent; because none can know when the supposed delinquent deserves them; while such penalties are utterly unavailable to enlighten and convince the mind,—and without the conviction of the mind, the profession of "religion" is hypocrisy.

26. "Governments" can have no rightful power over men's professions, or practices, which are not injurious to others; because coercion cannot in anywise affect men's sentiments. All the power "governments" can exert over their "subjects," has not the least tendency to alter men's opinions; all that it can do is, to restrain their

open professions or practices,—and to restrain these, upon points not at all injurious to others, when men cannot consistently act otherwise or alter their belief, can only compel them to become hypocrites, or to believe one thing while they profess another.

27. The forcible imposition of “faith” and “worship” upon the citizens tends directly to the overthrow of integrity, the derangement of the fair order of society, and the subversion of civil justice.

28. If the magistrate does not throw out any “bone of contention,” but takes care that all parties shall be equally free, and no injustice shall be suffered by any one on account of his opinions, or his disregard of “religious observances” and ceremonial days, there will then be nothing to animate discontent, to inflame passion, or to exasperate opposition; animosity will die of itself.

29. “Religious” dissensions cannot continue long, except among those who are instigated by interest or revenge; when all the motives to contention are taken away, except those of truth and usefulness, controversy will not then be virulent.

30. Let the dogmas of “Christianity” be separated wholly from wealth and power, as the rewards of supporting them, and in future, probably, little would be heard about them.

31. Uniformity in sentiment, which must be founded on similarity of judgment and equality of knowledge, seems to be absolutely unattainable. While men’s judgments differ, and one man is better informed than another, their opinions and practices will necessarily vary. So long as men dare speak and publish, they will speak and publish differently.

32. Many, indeed, have presumed to say to their fellow-men, “We permit you to exercise your reason upon *these* objects, but we forbid your exercising it upon *those* ;” but the friends of truth and of mankind have ever resisted their usurped authority.

33. No power or authority can rectify the existing and unavoidable discordance of “religious” opinions, by fixing upon any standard of uniformity. If the right of private judgment be surrendered, what can be substituted in its place? The claims of Popery were groundless, extravagant, and contradictory; can Protestants, who claim infallibility, propose any plausible centre of union, any particular standard for the decision of “theological” controversies, to which they may safely and honourably submit to as men?

34. Among the jarring opinions of persons equally fallible, it must be absolutely impossible to come to any other equitable conclusion than this:—“To reject all rule and constraint” in intellectual matters, and in observing or not observing “religious” ceremonies or “sacred” portions of time.

35. A constitution founded on universal justice, and the nature of civil society, is the infallible, easy, and single remedy to remove all the curable evils of political community, and to settle the welfare of states upon a solid and irreversible foundation.

36. The difficulties which the conscientious and liberal-minded

have had to encounter have afforded considerable assistance in the investigation and discovery of truth. Bigotry, violence, and persecution, have roused men's mental powers, and given them new vigour.

37. In the memoirs of the conflict between comparative light and darkness, from the early periods of history, it is interesting to discover that the absurdities which the good sense of the age is opposing with the vigour of recent insurrection, were, in fact, never left without witnesses against them; but that, in the full bloom and blossom of the "wisdom of our ancestors," there were always some, of whom the world was not worthy, who kept up in solitude the lamp of heresy and truth.

38. A great variety of absurd customs, rites, ceremonies, and day-keepings, have been, and still are, considered *moral*; notions and observances have prevailed which have been deemed moral by the most influential members of society, and such have been maintained, by arts and sophistries in exact proportion to the professional interests of the "holy order," the value put by the rich and the fashionable on them as furnishing the means for a display of their pomp and pride, or to the "sacred prejudices" or degree of moral light infused into the minds of the people.

39. The law of social duty, in the abstract, is simple, and not liable to be mistaken. It may, however, become perverted in consequence of positive ordinances, "governmental" and "religious;" but we find not a few instances in which the native energy of moral light, or sense of justice, and the exercise of a strong and cultivated reason, have risen superior to positive institutions, and wrought fundamental changes in the "laws," "religions," and other institutions which had sought to enchain it.

40. Exalted moral doctrines, entertained by the few, can only operate effectually when adopted by the mass of mankind, who relax their prejudices when the truth flashes on their minds.

" ————— On each glance of thought
Decision follows, as the thunder-bolt
Pursues the flash!"

Then preposterous institutions lose their power, which fall prostrate at the shrine of reason.

" Ye, that the rising morn invidious mark,
And hate the light, because your deeds are dark;
Ye, that expanding truth invidious view,
And think, or wish, the song of Hope untrue,—
Perhaps your puny hands presume to span
The march of genius, and the powers of man;
Perhaps ye watch, at Pride's unhallowed shrine,
Her victims newly slain, and thus divine—
' Here shall thy triumph, genius, cease, and here,
Truth, science, virtue,—close your short career!
Tyrants! in vain ye trace the wizard-ring;
In vain ye limit minds unwearied spring;
What! can ye lull the winged winds asleep?
Arrest the rolling world, or chain the deep?"

41. It is Reason that has thrown light on every spot which imagination once peopled with fantastic spectres.

42. The progressive improvement of men can best be secured by the prevention, in early life, of those artificial impressions and associations by means of which, when once riveted by habit, the strongest reason may be held in perpetual bondage. The force of prescriptive prejudice must be broken down by the gradual effect of the bold use of the press in publishing truth; and the good effects of this process are already become visible to common observers. How many errors have the writings of Locke caused to be abandoned! How many still remain to be gotten rid of, before the mind can recover that moral liberty which it ought to enjoy.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER VII. PART II.

1.

1. The whole aim of philosophy is, to examine the possibility, the nature, and the bounds of human knowledge; and it represents those as strictly confined to the territory of our sensible perceptions; philosophy is a system of conceptions and propositions on the merely conceivable ground of experience.

2. "Whence," inquires Mr. Locke, "comes the mind by that vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? I answer, in a word, from experience. In this all our knowledge is founded—from this the whole emanates and issues."

3. Whoever reflects, may convince himself that the only path to solid knowledge leads through the territory of philosophy; and those are as ignorant of scientific knowledge, as they are deficient in all true mental improvement, who fancy that philosophy consists merely of empty speculations.

4. Truth is the first instinct of society; yet have all nations paid dearly for establishments, calculated for the express purpose of confining inquiry, and shutting out all the avenues of light.

5. In respect to the religion and *morale* of a certain class of politicians, physical phenomena are to remain unexplained, mental diseases to be left uninvestigated, and children brought up in the belief of "ghosts," and in the agency of good and evil "spirits," because fear and ignorance are docile, and the mind which gets rid of one species of delusion may be disposed to encounter and overthrow another.

6. In our youth we are accustomed, through fear, to constrain our feelings; we find our joy, our sorrow, our anger, alike considered criminal, and we are chidden into restraint. From harshness we become acquainted with deceit; we are surrounded by systematized delusion, and we imbibe the contagion.

7. The ingenuity with which the ideas of childhood are sometimes defended in maturer years, proves the depth at which they are rooted

and the reluctance to resign long-accustomed prejudices. It is in the nursery that such weaknesses are acquired. Saturated at length with nursery-lore, the imagination seeks for subsistence amongst the more sublime but not less crude conceptions of invisible worlds. When the mind has become riveted on such objects, it is only a slight effort to open a communication with them; to creat ærial forms, and to people the "*terra incognita*" with vast and appalling phantoms.

8. The number of original, or free, thinkers is exceedingly small. In religion, in morals, in politics, and even in science, the generality of mankind are satisfied with the notions which they have imbibed in their infancy. The opinions in which they have been educated become consecrated from that very circumstance. How absurd soever they may be in reality, they cease to be so in their eyes; because they have been accustomed to consider them as first principles which they are not at liberty to reject, or even to call in question.

9 What men have hitherto been taught is, that it is their duty to accept of certain propositions *without* inquiry; or, which comes to the same thing, that their studies shall be directed in such a course as shall lead to one result.

10. Shall we proclaim that, while in the most ordinary transactions of private life, we employ our best judgment in determining upon them, and delegate to no one the power to act for us, in all that relates to moral reasoning—to nature and the conditions of our being,—we will see, and hear, and understand, only through the medium of others?

11. By the servile and imitative system of following a beaten track, the powers of original thought—of decompounding and viewing things in the abstract—must be proportionably weakened, from their never being called into use.

12. The first step to real improvement, is to make truth our guide, and to discard all doubtful, mysterious, and equivocal terms. When the intention is honest, the language should be direct, and there is nothing more suspicious than the use of ambiguous phraseology. The very means for conveying our conceptions is perverted into a hindrance to our advancement in philosophy. Language is seldom studied as the vehicle of truth, but esteemed for its own sake independently of its connexion with things. Unfortunately for us, this has been the means of concealing in shameful obscurity, the most profound researches and the sublimest truths. Every lover of truth will only study language for the purpose of communicating knowledge of actual science; for, since all truth is eternal, its nature can never be altered by transposition, though, by this means, its dress may become less certain and precise.

13. Correctness in the application of terms is intimately connected with correctness in morals and the conduct of life.

14. Precision in the use of terms is as necessary to correctness of thinking as to accuracy of expression. When words are adopted to

depict our thoughts or ideas, it is of importance to consider how far they afford exact representations, and how far they fail of performing the office which they profess to execute.

15. A sound knowledge of the philosophic sciences can by no means be dispensed with in a rational education. We must know the nature of the human mind, and be well versed in the peculiar action of its faculties, in order to discover the best means of awakening up conceptions in the minds of others, and putting their powers into action. No one can instruct others well, who has not acquired a happy facility in the formation, elucidation, order, and connection of conceptions. He who has not himself learned to think soundly and correctly cannot teach others to do so. He who does not know the sources of the innumerable prejudices, of the many false representations to which youth is exposed, is unable to stop them. He who does not know the weak sides of the mind, the various allurements and inducements by which youth are misled, can never successfully warn them against those practical errors, those false maxims. Education can only approach by the means of philosophy to its great aim; for, what is education but the cultivation of all the sensible, intellectual, and moral powers of man? Whence is the teacher to deduce the various ends of human attainment, but from that science alone which investigates the grounds of the possibility and reality of all experience, and which furnishes the principles of all thinking, willing, and acting, in the field of that experience?

16. Newton's hint that, "If natural philosophy should continue to be improved in its various branches, the bounds of moral philosophy would be enlarged also," is, perhaps, among the most important of human discoveries.

17. Religion embodies all its force in terror and mystery, and acknowledges no natural cause for the attainment of moral excellence, and no natural effect in the punishment which falls upon moral delinquency. The natural system of moral obligation arising out of the social relations of individuals in society, and the knowledge of the invariable order of things, presents a check to bad actions and inducements to good, through the effects which either are calculated to produce on ourselves, on our friends, or on the community. Religion calls for atonement to "god;" moral justice and common-sense recommend that efficient atonement, the object of which is, satisfaction to the aggrieved, and an humble sense, or acknowledgment of error, where such is called for by the nature of the transgression.

18. It would seem that a man who believes his eternal destiny to be already irrevocably fixed, is likely to indulge his passions without restraint. If he is an heir of wrath, his exertions must be unavailing; if he is pre-ordained to "glory," they must be superfluous.

19. When we consider the silly rites and absurd ceremonies recorded in the Christian Bible, we are at a loss to account for such monstrous stupidity, and wonder how it was ever possible for the grossest ignorance to be so imposed upon.

20. The doctrines of Nature strike at the root of all bigotry and superstition. Regarding all systems of "religion" as the inventions of men, they teach resignation to the events of the world as the results of inevitable necessity; but while they enforce resignation, they by no means preclude exertion.

21. Necessity does not suppose that the *will* cannot be influenced through means of human forethought, among the most powerful of which are approval and disapproval; and consequently, *indifference* respecting conduct would be, in the highest degree, unphilosophic.

22. These opinions limit the virtue or the exertions of man, no farther than they are limited by our nature; and, as they teach us that every action of our lives and every error of the world are the results of a natural sequence of occurrences, they tend to make us more truly moral than any system of superstition, which, by continually calling the attention to its pretended duties, or to external ceremonies and formalities, withdraws our thoughts from the practice of virtue, and substitutes "faith" for morality.

23. A practical relaxation of morose and austere discipline has uniformly attended the improvement of the social condition even under the prevalence of the most illiberal creeds; and the Calvinist of our own times is a "boon companion" and a "good fellow," in comparison with his blue-law ancestors; thus the connexion of cause and effect is seen to triumph over the permanence of dogma.

24. The human race are like plants, which though they may be ameliorated or rendered worse by being planted in a favorable or an untoward soil, are yet always essentially the same, and must be benefited or injured by the same circumstances.

25. A most important and fundamental truth, is the capability of the human mind, by the developement and proper application of its own elements and those of external nature, to rise in the scale of improvement; we do not say to perfection, but to a condition fairly calculated to satisfy the reasonable demands of our moral and intellectual faculties.

26. The general train of "religious" doctrine proceeds on a contrary principle. "Theology" is essentially scholastic and dogmatic, and not practical in its character. From the pulpit and the clerical press we receive no scientific expositions of the elementary qualities of human and physical nature, and of the effects of developing these, under the guidance of intelligence and moral principle; we are not encouraged to found our practical conduct on the basis of nature, and to look for enjoyment in the legitimate result of following out its institutions. The general system of religious inculcation is adverse to such principles. Nature stands condemned; it is regarded as debased; it is despised and abjured.

27. The advocates of the depravity of man refer to his violent passions, his limited understanding, his perverse will, and his countless crimes, as triumphant evidences of his worthlessness and weakness; but, on the other side, may not the meekness and benevolence, the

love of order, justice, elegance, and refinement, the acute observation, the profound reflection, and the splendid monuments of art, science, and social life which man has exhibited, be adduced as proofs of his dignity and his countless virtues?

28. There are many individuals who are utter sceptics as to the possibility of rendering mankind moral and intelligent by natural means; and these form an obstinate mass of resistance to the march of improvement, which the higher minds require to push or drag along, before the social body can advance a step.

29. Individual interests, professional superstition, prejudice, and ignorance, form the great impediments to moral improvement.

30. All human things naturally are, ever have been, and forever will be, in movement and change. How often, by *eternal* creeds, *eternal* forms of government, and the like, has it been attempted fiercely enough, and with destructive violence, to chain the *future* under the *past*, and say—Hitherto shalt thou go but no farther! Insane attempt! The destiny of individual man is to be in turn scholar, teacher, discoverer; by nature he has strength for learning, for imitating; but also a strength for acting, for knowing on his own account. Are we not in a world seen to be infinite, the relations lying closest together modified by those latest discovered and lying farthest asunder? Could you ever spell-bind man into a scholar merely, so that he had nothing to discover, to correct? Could you ever establish a theory of the universe that were entire, unimprovable, and which needed only to be got by heart? Man then were mentally defunct; the species we now name *man* had ceased to exist. Nature forbids such suicidal acts. Perfection of practice, like completeness of opinion, is always approaching, never arrived.

31. Science is a possession ever accumulating, and the *present* is ever the increasing sum total of the *past*.

32. In improvement, therefore, there is nothing terrible, nothing supernatural; on the contrary, it lies in the very essence of our life. What is all derangement and necessity of great change?—what is revolution, but the product simply of *increased resources* which the old *methods* can no longer administer?

33. What is scepticism, but the *sour* fruit of a most welcome increase of knowledge; a fruit, too, that will not always continue *sour*?

34. All knowledge is but the accumulation of improvements.

2.

1. In Colonel Hamilton's late work, he says:—"In the United States one is struck with the fact that there exist certain doctrines and opinions which have descended, like heir-looms, from generation to generation, and seem to form the subject of a sort of national entail, most felicitously contrived to check the natural tendency to intellectual advancement in the inheritors; the sons succeed to these

opinions of their fathers, and thus do certain dogmas gradually acquire a kind of prescriptive authority, and continue to be handed down unsubjected to the test of philosophical examination. Inquire their reasons for their in-bred faith, and you get nothing but a few shallow assertions, which absolutely afford no footing for the conclusions they are brought forward to establish. It is unquestionable that this character of mind is most unfavourable to national advancement."

2. There are few greater impediments to the progress of knowledge and the discovery of truth than an implicit reliance on the dicta of "authority." The idle habit of too readily assenting to the assertions of others, without investigation of the subject themselves, checks at once the spirit of research and inquiry, and serves oftentimes to confirm and propagate a belief in the grossest errors.

3. As men are disposed to take the most favourable view of their own abilities, they, in time, confound the mere notions or infusions of credulity with the results of experience, and mistake the one for the other; when the delusions of credulity have once come to this state, it is thenceforth incurable. Persons in this state, when they happen to have influence (and there are numbers of them in every country which has an hereditary system by means of which a certain portion of the inhabitants can assume "respectability" without any of the personal elements or attributes of being respectable), are stumbling-blocks in the way of all improvement. Their own habits, forms, and institutions, are regarded by them as something *sacred*—as having the right of immunity and immutability, and they are the direct enemies of all innovators.

4. Men will remain as they are as long as they submit to yield custom-trained reverential attendance at the credulity-temple, and listen with mute awe to the solemn nonsense droned forth by the reverend pulpit quack.

5. If it be wished to root from men's minds an error which they have long admitted without question, and "*believed in*" without inquiry, be it a prejudice ever so groundless and untenable, the fact of their having constantly admired it is of itself sufficient to offend their pride, perhaps even to arm their hostility against those who have proved themselves more cautious or more sceptical than themselves; there is nothing so confident in itself, or so intolerant, as ignorance.

6. The "*Bible*" is a book which we have all read in our childhood, when reason is not allowed to propose any doubts or objections, and when judgment is too feeble to decide for itself. Early associations are generally the strongest, and what we have been taught to credit as children, we are seldom disposed to question as men. Called away from speculative inquiries by the common business of life, men in general possess neither the inclination nor the leisure to examine *what* they believe, or *why* they believe. A powerful prejudice remains in the mind, ensures conviction, without the trouble of thinking, and repels doubt without the aid or authority of reason. A learned and

formidable body of professional profifiers are interested in opposing truth, and a free use of the right to inquire into *sacred* error would expose the free inquirer to the invectives of offended bigotry, and to the misrepresentations of interested malice.

7. Held in chains by custom, there are men who, even in opposition to their own best interests, shut their eyes against improvement. The language of such is—"Why should we pretend to be wiser than our forefathers?" Such men "love darkness rather than light," because of their obstinacy and overweening conceit. But, happily, there are others better disposed. There are minds of a superior order that are now bursting their chains, and loosening themselves from the trammels of "*authority*." A spirit of liberal inquiry prompts them to quit the old beaten paths of dogma and error, to disdain the bondage of prescription, and to seek to acquire wisdom by experience, observation, and the exercise of their REASON.

8. A spirit of inquisitiveness is abroad, a curiosity in criticising traditions, prying into mysteries, demanding *reasons* where *faith* alone is enjoined, and, in fine, to submit the whole apocalypse of Church and State to the rude gaze of vulgar speculation. All pious acquiescence in the mandates of "*authority*" has ceased; veneration and bell-bruitings are sneered at and denounced, and prescriptive abominations are now approached, discussed, and called for, without parley. Whatever may have been done in time gone by, a great question cannot now-a-days be choked up with the rubbish of bad English and flimsy inuendoes. To entertain such nullities in the light of arguments is only to subserve the tactic of weak but wily disputants. Absurdity is ever and anon thrown out, in order to form a nucleus for officious refutation, whilst reason thus cohering with folly, and thence partaking its nature, swathes what at first was a worthless atom into one huge mass of intolerable jargon. This being done, the object is gained. An enormous puzzle dams up the current of rational inquiry.

9. Superstition has but too many champions and supporters. These men, both from their numbers and by their means, raise such a clamour as they think must drown the "still small voice" of reason in the uproar. Some, by their talents and their learning, engage the attention of men of taste; others, by their zeal and industry, confirm the prejudices of the weak and ignorant; some affect to reason and persuade, while others seek to terrify and dismay. They controul the press—in their hands, that tyrant of opinion; with them is the cry of the multitude; with them the sanction of "the laws." The weapons with which they fight are either borrowed from the armoury of "heaven," or forged in the "fires of hell," and they are made to be felt by the actual inflictions of earthly tyranny. When they condescend to argue, their logic is governed by rules of their own. In a pulpit, where a priest has the framing both of his own arguments and that of his antagonist, he must be a very unskilful logician if he did not make it appear that he came off with advantage. Bold assump-

tions, though constantly refuted by the advocates of truth, the entire mis-statement of an opponent's argument, is not an illegitimate mode of carrying on a controversy from the pulpit. But their strength—and none know it better than the priests themselves, lies not in reasoning; and hence the scurrilous invective, or the bitter taunt; the opprobrious epithet, or the scornful sneer.

10. That school-men declare themselves against new opinions, views, and systems, as they do also against new events, against remarkable and pre-eminent men, who announce or effect great changes or improvements, ought in no-wise to surprise us, since they see that to which they owe their whole existence and distinction menaced or endangered.

11. Professional mystagogues have attempted to perpetuate their lucrative craft by tautologies and circumlocutions; and they have deluged the world with fraud, sophistry, and injustice.

12. A sect-congregating, unprincipled, false, and selfish "clergy," are stubbornly looking back to an inapplicable past as a profitable "blessing" they must strive to maintain. They hold to the absolute and exclusive, in defiance of the regular onward course of rational enlightenment, and they would crush the demands of a new mental impulse. They strive to accomplish their nefarious ends by indurating the arrogant prejudices of the ignorant.

13. It is quite dreadful, when a "reverend divine" juggler, shrined in his sacred pulpit, with incredible coolness and confidence, spouts forth his most inconclusive and inexplicable doctrines of "*spirituality*" before formally congregated dupes, awe-disciplined mutes, hushed into subservient silence, while at the same time he that listens, looks, and re-looks, blinking with one eye, and then with the other, neither knowing what he had learnt, or what he ought to learn, from the reverend preacher's most stupid, but most impudent, babble.

14. The "religion" of the priests presents us only with objects of foolish fear and miserable mummeries; it also consecrates the whole code of despotism on which the authority of the "Church" is founded.

15. In perfect consistency with his claim of "*gospel*"-infallibility, the "theologue" professes to have come into possession of his scheme of "religion," not by a slow and painful induction of principles from reason, but by clutching at once the thing *sent him from* "God"—the "*divine*" science. That intolerance which, by an unavoidably necessary consequence, attends "theology," cannot, in the reason of things, admit of freedom; it is iron-bound on every side. You must receive it as it is, or reject it; it were folly to talk of diversities of opinion in relation to that which is *made* absolutely *true*, but is utterly *false*. No medium can possibly be assigned between reasoning freely and not reasoning at all; between submitting implicitly to any Church authority, and to none.

16. The mystery-monger

" ————— lyeth sure
In the black cloud of his thick vomiture."

17. The mystery-preaching, the magical, or spiritual illusions, with which nations have hitherto been deceived, can be managed only in a mist. Reason has at length, in some extent, dispelled it. All the social institutions must now be submitted to her revisal. The growth of a civilization more diffusive must be favoured. The superfluous "laws" of the superannuated establishments of barbarous ages must be carefully removed. They cannot long be held up, even by force. Violent means, beside their being no less unjust than odious, may indeed seem to avail for the moment, but, in reality, they only accelerate the catastrophe they are intended to prevent. It is obvious, therefore, that nothing remains but the sooner the better to resolve upon doing what ought to have been done long ago.

18. The mind, pursuing its search after truth, destroys an insufficient doctrine to construct another which is less so; and at the same time it overturns the institutions derived from them, marching on towards other modes of existence, improving more and more. Such is the labour and object of civilization. Civilization is only the successive development of solutions which arise in the heart of humanity upon the question of its conditions, and which it enlightens and completes little by little, causing the errors which surrounded its first essays gradually to disappear.

19. Everything alters around us in the social as well as the political world; principles and theories, unheard of a century ago, become paramount, and still the "Church" remains the same. Buried in the atmosphere in which they have been bred, the priests see nothing still but a submissive believing world at their feet. Hence their manifest surprise when removed from their own sectarian spheres into the world at large, at finding themselves roughly used by "unbelievers," of the numbers of whom, and of the extent of whose unbelief, they had no previous idea.

20. A sufficient portion of society may have detected tyranny and usurpation, and an extension of numbers will lead to their subversion. A stop will be put to governmental and religious domination. Enlightenment must necessarily precede political melioration, and the established enjoyment of rights. The period of partialism and injustice will be shortened in proportion as legislative rectitude occupies a principal share in the public disquisitions. When the more considerable part of the nation becomes convinced of the flagrant absurdity of its institutions, its "laws," the whole will soon be prepared tranquilly and by common consent to supersede them.

21. In proportion as men become free, intelligent, and virtuous, as the thrones of monarchical tyrants have discovered symptoms of the dry-rot, the altar and the pulpit of Church tyrants catch the disease, and the Bible, flaring upon its communion-bench, becomes an idiot's or a Church-aristocrat's bauble, more to be looked at than looked into; and its shamming advocates are driven back into the dark ages, to drag forth the "testimonies" which have been borne to "the Bible" by men who were professional hirelings, or by

those who wrote under the terrors of "penal statutes," when to have published a word against the "Bible" was death at the gallows or the stake.

22. Does not the fact of the present character of "*Churchism*" tend to support the general truth that those things which priests especially desire to preserve, are, beyond the powers of prevention, doomed and destined to be taken from them? Has not aristocratic "Church" well nigh numbered its days? Has not the "*humpty-dumpty*" almost lost its poise?—and is it not about to be precipitated from the eminence on which it has been "*squatting*," while we bred fools were gaping and gazing at it in a most stupid admiration?

23. What wretched idols, puffed out in black of some fine fabric or other, do men either worship, or, being tired of worshipping (so expensively without fruit), do now rend in pieces and kick out of doors, amid loud shouting and crowing, what they call "tremendous cheers," as if the feat were miraculous.

24. In "*matters spiritual*," what avail sit that a man be dubbed "*doctor*," and that he can cover half a square foot in *pica type* with the list of his degrees and fellowships, arranged as an equilateral triangle, at the vertex set off with an "&c." over and above; and with the parchment of his "diplomas" he could roof his big money-getting God-house in which he holds forth; what avails it? The man is but an owl, of imposing gravity, indeed, robed in his stare-exciting vestments, much revered by the simple dupes of his sect, but to whose dismal hootings no man of sense "hastens eager to listen." From indolence, incapacity, and several other causes, nine tenths of those who are called the "learned"—that is, of those who are in possession of certificates that they have "graduated" at some "College" or other—B. A.'s, D. D.'s, &c.—are mere drivellers or copyists in all matters of thought.

25. There has been one revolution by which monarch-power was shaken off, and there is now pretty rapidly proceeding another revolutionary movement for obtaining a freedom from priest-power, whereby everything (including oath-splutterings, ceremony-idlings, bells and chains), as in the term-day of a great city, when all mortals are removing, has been, so to speak, set out into the street; and many a foolish vessel of dishonour, unnoticed in its own dark corner, has been universally recognised when once mounted on the summit of some furniture-cart, and tottering there, with what is concealed under its dome (as committee president, society-director, or other reverend sir)—slowly urged onwards to its new lodgment and arrangement—itsself, alas! hardly to get there without breakage, and finally destined to be thrown to the heap of other refuse. Crowded succession already means quick oblivion; cart after cart moves on, and so the vessels of dishonour, which offend us by their joltings when pushing through the obstruction of some chained street, or by

their inodorous nuisance, or their cracked din when shattered by some tumbling-down temple, will soon afflict us no more.

26. Then the printing press, with stitched and loose leaves, has now come into full action, and makes as it were a sort of universal daylight, for removal and revolution, and for every thing else to proceed in far more commodiously and with far more fair play, yet also far more conspicuously.

27. Before the march of a new era, it sends forth men acquainted with its views to procure it accommodations, but instead of receiving these heralds and listening to their counsels, they are denounced as "demagogues," "disaffected," "revolutionary,"—but time arrives with all her suite, and finding nothing prepared, she makes her lodgments as she can, overturning and destroying far more than would otherwise have been required to make room for them.

28. There comes a time when the mouldering-down of an ill-favoured social system changes into a rushing; active hands drive in their wedges, set to their crow-bars; there is a comfortable appearance of work going on. Instead of here and there a stone falling out, here and there a handful of dust, whole masses tumble down, whole clouds and whirlwinds ascend; torches too are applied, and the rotten lumber easily takes fire: so that what with flame-whirlwind, what with dust-volume, and the crash of falling turrets and steeples, the concern grows eminently interesting; and *vivets*, cries of *speed the work*, encourage the assiduous assailants. Then dust, smoke, vapour pass away and are dispersed, and the regions before us are left in clear outline with all their lights and shadows.

29. That we live on the eve of great changes, which must come, if not with noise and tumult, yet with a gradual, steady, and irresistible progress,—those can hardly be said to think at all who do not discern. The actual invasion of those changes does not depend upon any single man, or body of men; the tide is on its way, and it belongs not to power to say to it, "*stand still*." If "governments" still persist with a blind and insane obstinacy in endeavouring to oppose its wave by a stern and unyielding resistance, the stronger the embankments they raise up against it, the more terrific will be its fury as it sweeps them away, and the wider and more ruinous the devastation which it will spread around it when its triumph shall be achieved.

30. If a nation shall be found upon earth, wherein the tyranny of "*rulers*," the presumption of "*the great*," and the oppression of the people shall proceed in equal progress with the culture of all the faculties of mankind, and both arrive so nearly together at their acmé, that at one and the same moment the eyes of all the oppressed shall be opened, and the arms of all be uplifted for vengeance—then will be executed a severe retribution against every one of "*the mighty*" who has trodden under foot the rights of man, and in the drunkenness of his pride owned no law but the inordinate whims of his passions and caprices.

" Theirs be the crime !
 Theirs, who, weak and vain,
 Would with links of slavery
 Thought and you enchain,
 Hating most of all the free :
 Theirs be the crime !"

31. We have witnessed the dogged determination of " Church " to effect its ends. For ages have the divine and reverend order of black-frocks been watching to prevent, defeat, secure, destroy. Can it be supposed that their lynx-eyed vigilance has ever missed an opportunity of mischief, or that they have failed in promptitude to seize an occasion to advance their own ends of grasping and aggrandizement? No, no; they have all along been acting up to their true designation " children of this world." But the elements of truth have fought for us, and what shall stand against them? He who runs may now read, that the ignorant, and the abject, and the needy are destined to be raised to comparative equality and content, and that the proud and luxurious " classes " of society will be gradually brought down to a due sense of their essential insignificance. We shall yet witness a just depreciation of " upper-class " consequence. Aristocratic institutions are profitable to none but genteel coxcombs and idle church-men.

32. Such is the enlightenment of men's ideas, and such the improved state of society, that at present it is deemed exceedingly preposterous that our ancestors, hardly emerged from Popish darkness, should dictate to us what we should believe.

33. " Believers " make a demand on our imagination to which it cannot yield; the forced admission of fiction is attempted, at a time, too, when truth is felt to the mind all-sufficient, and the obtrusion of the other to be an obtrusion of unsubstantial dreams on the steadfast sanctity of nature.

34. Is it justice, is it honour, is it honesty, that will struggle still to keep up in " sanctity and reverence " a system of iniquity, deceit, and crime, which its own advocates dared not undertake to defend where a man had liberty to show them how absurd and how wicked it is?

35. All the trick, or " religion," that ever was in the world, on the part of those who were not themselves the dupes and tools of others, has never been aught else than a scheming, greedy, grasping at unrighteous gain and tyrannous usurpation of an undue influence over the minds that could easily be cajoled and terrified.

36. Mysterious and unintelligible propositions and doctrines cannot concern the happiness of mankind; why, then, should the public—the " laity," as termed by ecclesiastical impertinence—of any country reward priests for " explaining " what are acknowledged to be inexplicable, and, to all intents and purposes, nonentities to them?

37. An epoch has now commenced in which the public mind has taken wing towards a nobler flight than it ever attempted before, and the change which it promises forebodes the greatest consequences.

The diffusion of knowledge among men of every condition is now becoming so general, that in half a century the poorer members of society will contain a larger proportion of men who will be able to reason soundly, than, a century ago could have been reckoned in the "higher classes;" and the occupants of modern cottages will soon be better instructed than those of feudal Châtelains or parsonage-houses ever were.

38. Knowledge must ascend from the people until it reach the pulpit. The mists that are gathered round the "summits of society" will be the last to disperse.

39. Education spreads out her establishments powerful and all-comprehensive,—affording the rich prospect of mankind advancing in culture and industry,—whose maxim may be, for every member of the community a fair share in the possession and enjoyment of the stock of good existing in the world, and the liberation of the mind from those fetters which can be broken.

40. All people must in some way or other, be taken into society—be made to see what is going on, to know what has gone on; to learn the sequence of cause and effect, and its use in the guidance of men in life. This, and this alone, can take them out of the dominion of their passions.

41. Were the mental power of the *poor* man properly cultivated in youth,—were his energies properly directed, and his pride engaged in the love of that distinction which arises from the possession of knowledge, how different would be the conduct of thousands who are lost to a sense of their degraded situation, because they have never been elevated above it.

42. In general, man is virtuous and honest in proportion as he is secured in the enjoyment of his nature—equality, liberty, and property;—in proportion as he is robbed of these, his principles are relaxed, and his character debased.

43. That literature, by which prejudice is superseded, has hitherto existed only as the portion of a few. The many have been kept in darkness and deprived of its illumination. For society to succeed to its possession, it will be necessary that the general system of policy shall become favourable; that every individual shall have leisure for reading and reflecting, and that there shall be no commanding or over-weening species of public institution which, having falsehood for its basis, shall counteract his progress.

44. Yet there are those, who view the dissemination of instruction with apprehension, and suppose that it will turn the minds of artisans and labourers from their necessary employments. Neither does the comparison between the happiness and misery, the morality and the vice, of the instructed and uninstructed,—a comparison so much in favour of the former,—destroy the prejudice. That the novelty of instruction gives some inexperienced minds exaggerated notions of their own importance, can easily be imagined; but a habit of know-

ledge will dispel these conceits. The results of education to the poor will be to teach them that there are hardships in life, his share in which it is the duty of every man to endure patiently.

45. History proves that the diffusion of information never was detrimental, and that when the priesthood alone were in possession of learning, "*religion*" was made an instrument of tyrannical authority, and the church usurped all power. Knowledge is dangerous only when it enables the learned few to lead and mislead the ignorant multitude.

46. True and solid glory can only be founded upon humanity, the love of mankind, sensibility, and gentleness of manners. Are men ignorant, and are they full of prejudices? Alas! education, example, habit, and authority oblige them to be so. Men are born not into a free and natural state, but into an artificial world, intersected and divided in all directions by boundary-lines; long appropriated and cumbered by successive heaps of dead matter, deaf or hostile to the claims of intellect or of character. Are they slaves to vice, passion, and frivolous desires? Those who regulate their destiny, the usurpers of "rule" over them, the impostors who seduce them, the models which they have before their eyes, produce in their hearts all the vices that torment them. To hate and despise men for their errors and follies, is to insult those whom we ought to pity, and to reproach them foolishly with necessary and unavoidable infirmities.

47. Let us comfort man, therefore, but let us never insult and despise him; on the contrary, let us inspire him with confidence; let us teach him to set a just value upon himself, and to feel his own equality and importance; let us exalt his views, and give him, if possible, that vigour and force which so many causes combine to enfeeble and destroy. True wisdom is bold and manly; it never assumes the haughty and imperious air of superstition which seems to have nothing else in view but to debase and annihilate people's minds. If we have warmth and energy of character, and if we are susceptible of a deep and strong indignation, let us rouse and exert ourselves against those falsehoods and impostures of which our species have been so long the victims; let us boldly attack those prejudices which are the real sources of all human calamities; let us destroy, in the opinion of our brethren, the empire of those priests and "authorities" by whom their ignorance and credulity have been abused; let us wage an eternal war with holy superstition; let us vow irreconcilable enmity to that sacred despotism which for so many ages, has fixed its throne in the midst of wretched nations. If we find ourselves possessed of superior knowledge, let us communicate it to others; if we are more intrepid, let us lend to others a helping hand; if we are *free* let us point out to others the means for asserting the like freedom; let us endeavour to rid men of their servile and debasing prejudices, and the shackles which opinion has forged will soon fall loose from them. To insult the wretched is the height of barbarity; to refuse to lead the blind, is the height of cruelty; to reproach them bitterly for having fallen into the ditch, is both folly and inhumanity.

48. Let us use all the reason we have, to combat with the sophistries of those who would misdirect us; and the knowledge and liberty we have acquired as the means of attaining more. Let us press boldly on, and do our best to make the period that is before us more illustrative of the advance of popular wisdom, virtue, and freedom, than that which we are leaving behind; opening wider and wider to the view of posterity the prospect of that glorious day, when slavery shall clank no chain, when ignorance shall darken neither realm nor race, when truth and morality shall be exalted on the ruins of fraud and superstition; when Tyranny shall be no more.

49. All the endeavours of the enlightened man should be dictated by the wish to represent the *False*, the *Distorted*, the *Vulgar*, in all their nothingness; to maintain that higher freedom of thought and will, guided by reason, which raise men to their true dignity:

“ So that the good may work, may grow, may profit;
So that the day of the Just may come at length.”

50. It should be laid down as a maxim, to work by means of ever-renewed exposition and practice of—the continued inculcation of—the *True* and the *Right*. Steady, unflinching perseverance may be practiced by the most humble, and will seldom fail of its end; because its quiet power grows resistless with the lapse of time. The object is, to free reason from the constraint of cramping rules and the extravagance of religious dogmata.

51. Truth must infallibly be struck out by the collision of mind with mind. For a time, the press may be fertile in producing paradox, and powerful in sustaining error, but these will be only diurnals, while the truths that spring up will defy the rigour of season and climate. In proportion as one reasoner compares his deductions with those of another, the weak places of argument will be detected, the notions too hastily adopted overthrown, and when the mind shall be exposed to no sinister influence, correct judgments will be confirmed. All that is requisite in these discussions is, unlimited speculation, unshackled investigation. While we only dispute about the best way of doing a thing in itself wrong, we shall indeed make but a trifling progress; but when we are once persuaded that nothing is too *sacred* to be brought to the touchstone of investigation, truth will advance with a rapid stride. Errors, however long they have reigned, will combat each other; prejudices that have passed unsuspected for ages, will be detected; but in every science the truth discovered will be established.

52. Controversy is itself a great good; it is the awakener of intellect and the scatterer of instruction. Why sink religious sectaries into literary insignificance? Because their precautions against innovation operate to crush inquiry and discussion.

53. The discovery of truth is a pursuit of vast extent. Those lines, which seem at present to mark the limits of human understanding, will, like the mists that rise from a lake, retire farther and farther the more closely we approach them.

54. Reason enters more largely than it used to do into all our pursuits ; even those of mere amusement. In the present state of society, the most delightful illusions of the imagination are beginning to be considered childish things, if they do not satisfy that faculty which is now called into such incessant action—our *reason*.

55. In spite of innumerable obstacles, the small bark which is freighted with the germs of much of the knowledge on which social happiness must be based, still goes steadily onwards, provided with all that is needful to secure the ultimate success of the voyage. Knowledge is daily gaining upon the world, and close at hand follows wisdom to turn every fresh accession of it to the purpose of political justice—of social utility. Not what is taught in schools, that dubious kind of knowledge resting solely on authority and rarely producing fruit. True knowledge is of that practical kind which leads to the strengthening of the *reasoning* powers, amongst the great mass of mankind, and renders it a difficult matter to gull them as of yore with the coarse devices which the self-interested, and low-minded among them, whether “*rulers*,” “*priests*,” or “*lawyers*,” have been accustomed to set up. Mankind are still gullible, it is true, but the number of those who can hope to succeed in gulling them, is every day lessening, because a larger amount of skill is required to overreach their extended capacities. Errors are becoming more and more obvious to the increasing light of truth. When ignorance shall disappear from the majority, professional craftsmen will no longer prosper, and misery will vanish. Those who have long lamented the results of ignorance, had they possessed the confidence of their fellows, might have applied the needful remedies ; but the unscrupulous charlatan, the priest, has ever enlisted the passions of the multitude in his service. Still the prospect is cheering ; numbers now refuse to join the throng who crowd to the temples and worship the senseless idols which authority had set up. The ignorant or designing may still obstruct the pathway to truth, but a view of its embodied form is discovered through the rising ferment.

56. In what else has originated the mighty hue-and-cry against “*unbelief*,” and the exceeding virulence of the “*saints*?” How comes the free exercise of our free thoughts, which should be as free as air, and our free speech as free as our free thoughts, to be so grievous to the “*clergy*?” It spoils their trade ; it crosses the path of their ambition. Should men become “*unbelievers*” and act and reason like men,

“*Othello’s occupation’s gone !*”

the black craft would be in danger, the craft that makes men fools to make them slaves, and promises them a “*heaven*” of happiness to reconcile them to a world of misery. With that united cunning and rascality which ever characterize priestcraft, they endeavour to raise the general squeal against the learning with which they cannot compete, and the superior honesty which would employ that learning to free men from the yoke of ignorance and servility.

57. The whole argument, then, of terror and danger which the priests denounce against "unbelievers," is the danger and terror to themselves.

58. These are days when it behoves every man to *think*. The empire of *mind* will soon bear away the rule from all other empires; usage and prejudice, feudal privilege, feudal ignorance, and feudal religion—priestcraft—systems built upon legendary trash, and conventional forms instituted in the nonage of society, must soon yield to those inevitable changes which the right use of reason will effect.

59. The special, sole, and deepest theme of the world's and man's history, whereto all other themes are subordinate, remains the conflict of UNBELEIF and BELIEF. The school of REASON is now every where in strife with the school of AUTHORITY.

60. Ye youthful people of America, weary not in your progress forward! Give yourselves up to no "authority," no *sect-following*. Know that whatever severs us from nature is *false*. The path of nature is that in which you must tread. On all sides there is much to do! See but with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears. Lastly, let not the hostility of man trouble you.

61. If ever there was a time when young men ought to bestir themselves, and pay particular attention to the cultivation of their intellect, it is surely now, when knowledge is triumphantly traversing the length and breadth of our land, exerting its beneficial influence upon man in every condition of life; removing the veil which illusion had cast over truth; dispersing the mists and vapours which had obscured the mental landscape; and triumphing over ignorance when seated most authoritatively and reverently in her temples and strong holds.

62. Everlasting, universal, Nature:—the grandeur, the importance, of such fundamental and leading conceptions, is apparent only to the mind on which they exercise their infinite activity—is apparent only to that free age which has been longingly waited for, in which they come forth at the fit and proper moment.

63. Now do those, who are capable of thriving upon such nutriment, delightfully employ themselves in its cultivation; they have within them the glad consciousness of a luxuriant growth; while men are not wanting who set themselves in instant opposition to such influences, nor others who step in to quibble and cavil at thoughts so far above them.

64. When a man once gets himself involved in false principles, he will find himself bound in adamant trammels, which will conquer all his efforts to burst asunder, although these errors may have become evident, unless his mind be strong, and his determination undaunted.

65. The first stage of a true enlightenment is, that man should reflect upon his condition and circumstances, and he brought to regard them in the most agreeable light. Then the previously rude and unobservant man, who took every thing for granted, is awakened to an attentive observation of that infinitely extending nature in which he is involved.

66. The emancipation of our race from a state of ignorant debasement and confounding perplexity; the regeneration of high impulses will take place when mankind, by their own efforts, shall have raised themselves to a state of intelligence and freedom that seemed lost to them.

67. A conviction of having, by his own proper exertion and steadfast will, raised himself out of cramping circumstances, and educated himself out of himself; of owing his attainments to himself alone, and of being able to extend and increase these advantages, solely by an unfettered aspiration of the mind, enhances the natural feeling of independence.

68. That bright freedom of spirit, that serene glance into the universe, causes happiness to beam forth from the peace within; but a man, though he enjoy this universal complacency, will, when he sees a *peculiar* doctrine set up, a contracted and contracting "*religion*" preached, have his mind roused even to passion; then does even the peaceful man rise up, grasp his weapon, and go forth against errors which he thinks so fearfully pernicious—against credulity and superstition—against phantoms arising out of the opacity of ignorance;—against reason—abhorring intellect, destroying dogmas—against decrees and "*anathemas*"—against denouncers of heresy, priests of bell, clerical hosts, and against their great common progenitor, the money-making trade of superstition.

69. Science has taught us what "*revelation*," under none of its assumed forms—Moslem, Jewish, or Christian—had condescended to impart, viz., the simple construction of our solar system, and its connexion with the system of the universe:

70. When we reflect on the incomprehensible universe, what becomes of the littleness of Judaism and Christianity, confined to a mere cranny of one small earth? How can the ideas of incommensurability and "*God*" be entertained by the same thought?

71. Why are we not to trace the believer's "*dark supreme*" through the infinite, or as far as intellect and reason can reach? Are our soaring imaginations, acute senses, and the unlimited extent of our mechanical and metaphysical ingenuity, think ye, to be tethered by priests and creeds to a narrow circle?

72. Why should we not let our attentions revert, as they invariably would, if the old inveterate obstacle of "*religion*" were removed, to the road of truth, to points where our sentiments might respond? Respond! Aye—why for ever grate harsh discords? Why not open our mental ears, and allow reason to touch those genial chords which might lead our hearts to vibrate in unison?

73. Is there something in the fact of the necessary eternity, which too greatly transcends the superficial conceptions of the undisciplined mind? Is it the vulgar conclusion that "*common sense*" is alone compatible with the vulgar doctrine, "*everything must have a beginning*," without distinguishing between the finite and the infinite?

74. The faculties of uneducated mind take cognizance only of

general notions ; its decisions are valueless on topics foreign to those it is conversant with, and even on its most familiar topics, viewed under a novel aspect. We must make a vigorous effort to dethrone the host of prejudices which have usurped the place of reason, for it is no easy matter to reject the hasty generalization of *common sense*, which, being acquired during the vagueness of early and desultory speculations, are almost always arranged on the side of error.

75. One of the principal objects of scientific inquiry is, the comparison of different objects, and the formation of general conclusions from those comparisons. To proceed analytically from phenomena to hypothesis, and from the present to the past and future, should be the endeavour of the observer of nature.

76. Truth is the verdict of human reason. All other pretensions to it are only so many avenues to fallacy and superstition.

77. The more that man, by reflecting, extends, enlarges, and generalizes the sphere of his consciousness, the more he elevates himself from sensation to mental conception, and from opinions to convictions ; the more he advances from a mere state of consciousness obscure and imperfect, to an enlightened understanding ; from blind faith to rational knowledge, from individual or finite, to the universal, the necessary, the infinite. It is thus that, guided by a sentiment of truth, of harmony, of analogy, he prosecutes the pursuit of something certain, to which may be referred, and by which may be attested all the points of belief which have attracted his attention. It is thus that he attempts philosophy, at first to satisfy his own mind ; afterwards with a more general view, for the advancement of reason itself, whose object is that which is invariable, absolute, and indisputable.

78. If all is in motion and in labour in the interior, as all is in motion and labour on the outside of the globe, we arrive at a result of the highest importance, since it seems applicable to infinite existence ; and there is thus obtained a most powerful proof of the great principle of universal instability—a principle superior to the great rules which we are accustomed to regard as exclusively constituting the laws of nature, and by the aid of which we see beyond the longest and apparently most perfect periodicities of our solar system ; a principle which appears to govern the universe even in its minutest parts, which continually modifies things, alters and displaces them insensibly and irrevocably, and leads them through the immensity of ages to new ends, which science cannot assuredly penetrate, but of which it may at least boast of having foreseen the necessity.

79. What, indeed, are all the motions of the planets ?—what are their progressions, their stations, their retrogradations, their revolutions, their nutations, but so many movements in the larger molecules of the universe ?

80. It is only because the universe is infinite and eternal that everything remains in equilibrium.

81. Viewing the permanent, but knowing how to trace it in the midst of change, we recognize motion as the true element of the

universe. A chain extends into unending time, fruit succeeding to blossom, one effect following out another, in boundless, rich, productive continuity.

82. It is only by a philosophical education that men can be easily trained to the use of general terms and comprehensive propositions, and can be provided with the means of forming those observations, on which the most ennobling of all the state of mental consciousness depends.

“ ———— ’Tis known
That when we stand upon our nature’s soil,
Unobserved by such objects as oppress
Our active powers, those powers thereby become
Strong to subvert our anxious qualities ;
Thus swerve distemper from the busy day,
And make the vessel of the big round year
Run o’er with gladness.”

“ ———— Our life is turned
Out of its course, wherever man is made
An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool
Or implement, a passive thing employed,
Or brute mean, without acknowledgment
Of common right, or interest in the end ;
Used or abused as selfishness may prompt,
Say, what can follow for a rational mind
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
And strength in evil ?”

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER VIII. PART II.

I.

“ O, ceremony, shew me but thy worth !
What is thy toll ? O, adoration !
Art thou nought else, but place, degree, and form,
Creating awe and fear in other men ?”

“ ———— Oh place ! Oh form !
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools, and tie even wiser souls
To thy false seeming !”

1. Amongst the many gross and palpable delusions resorted to for the purpose of blinding and prejudicing the public mind, there is none more disgusting to common sense and just feeling, than the contemptible practice which insinuates itself into all the orthodox literary and scientific writings, of referring constantly to the bible-fables—universe-creation, man’s apple-tree fall, god-vindictive drowning, Babel tongue-confusion, &c. &c.—as so many indisputable bases of truth.

2. The sole principle on which all subjects are to be treated, is the belief that the Jewish traditions—“ the muddy fountain of everlasting nonsense”—are “ divine oracles.” The silly legends of creation and destruction, adopted from the Israelitish superstitions, are made the foundation on which the fabric of our ideas is to be built up.

3. The satisfaction derived from pursuits in the field of literature, is qualified with the mortification of finding that every subject is

treated in a manner constraining it to accord with the "religious faith" of the day : our pains taken to acquire knowledge by studying the contents of books, are defeated and disappointed by our discovering that their chief aim is to strengthen the edifice of *church-craft*.

4. A learned and profound philosopher of a former age has declared, that there are no greater flatterers of those in power, than "clergymen." Had this writer lived in the present time, he would have found the objects of clerical devotion not a little varied ; for the great body of the order are now engaged in supporting the most foolish and most mischievous prejudices. He would have seen how intensely they are occupied in nourishing the flame of religious bigotry ; how sedulously they bend the whole of their energies, their industry, their talents, and their erudition, to the recovery of every element of social discord, which in the lapse of time, and by the progress of liberal knowledge and manners, had fallen into oblivion. This object they pursue under a thousand varied disguises. The shape of history, romance, poem, and light essay, and we may add the inviting one of biography, have been successively assumed for the purpose of more securely effecting the desired end.

5. The memoirs of priests and prelates are all made to bear one conspicuous mark of resemblance in the zeal and pertinacity with which they recommend to the admiration or acquiescence of mankind all that had been done, and taught, and "established," by the church ; so as thus to maintain the lucrative reverence for priest, bible, and bell.

6. The Church-ridden press is managed so as to be a means of representing none as RESPECTABLE, unless they lend themselves to the upholding of the consequence of the priest—the nucleus of aristocracy.

7. Tracts are stereotyped, showing the peculiar acceptability to "heaven" of affectedly mortified and aggrieved spirits, and hypocritically sour and sanctimonious faces.

8. We have "Discourses on the Evidences" and "Bridgewater Treatises," endeavouring with smallest result, to make it probable that such a thing as "religion" exists.

9. The man of sense who dares to join the conspiracy against his species is not more disgusted with the knavery than by the dupery by which he is surrounded. There are certain common-place bases upon which all questions must be decided, and the pert self-sufficiency with which the confiding multitude repeat them as undeniable truths, is at least as provoking as the easy impudence of the ordained rogues, who themselves scarcely take the pains of concealing the machinery of their phantasmagoria, or of even affecting to believe the doctrines they preach.

10. A more base fraud could not be practised than that of arrogating the designation, "divine truth," for the falsehoods and nonsense that form the stock in trade of the black gown-order.

11. Nothing can be more likely to move an ingenuous mind to indignation, than to see those who, from indolence or indifference,

are secretly sceptical to all "religion," yet joining in the vulgar cry of "infidelity" against those who will not *profess* to ascent to what they do not believe.

12. The opposition, and even the personal abuse of the ignorant bigot and fanatic may be borne, for they are, at least, consistent; but can the honest feelings be commanded, when worldly, intriguing, hollow-hearted men array themselves against reform, and affect a concern for prejudice and antiquated errors which, in their hearts, they despise?

13. The effect, indeed, of inveterate habits is not capable of being repealed at a word; prejudices and passions, we know, cannot be got rid of in a day; great obscurity and contrariety of opinions often linger over a subject in a sort of twilight, which the defective or temporary systems of former periods usually leave behind them when they disappear.

14. Liberality makes a large allowance for educational feelings and habitual mistakes; but deceptive attempt, false reasonings, and perverted facts, are only to be dealt with by direct and plain exposure.

15. Oh shame! who are those that are truly contemptible, and must feel themselves to be so, but those who truckle to a lie; who keep it up to impose on others without even the poor apology of being imposed on themselves, and who *must* say so, or *must* seem so, *must* connive, and *must* be silent, that thieves and liars may reign and prosper?

16. Is it not better, a thousand times better, to shut ourselves for ever in a garret, with the few authors who have dared to write after their conscience, than be compelled eternally to wear a mask, to associate without sympathy and to bow the head to successful imposture and triumphant folly? What worse companion can we have than the sycophant who will not trust his own reason, or who, beholding the truth, belies his own conscience to avoid the malice of those who live and fatten on the popular lie?

17. The little that is to be got by contending when the favor or the frowns of "the great" can so easily supersede the strongest arguments founded upon reason, is a consideration that may dispose many sensible minds to keep their sentiments to themselves, and to acquiesce under many inconveniences in their present situation, and wait with patience for that desirable season when the mists of prejudice shall be dispelled and way made for the free course of truth and righteousness by the removal of overbearing authority and of the corrupt influence of policy.

18. The moral debility and disorder induced by the early engrafted vice of superstition, is apt to remain when the core of the disease seems to have been eradicated; and 'tis long ere the reasoning faculty, after having conquered its freedom from the usurpation of imposture, can exert itself vigorously and act upon the perception of its duty.

19. There is now, however, a growing disposition in the world,

among the intelligent part of it at least, to prize truth and veracity ; to look with disdain on all artifice, disingenuity, and disguise ; to regard the business of life no longer as an affair which demands unre-mitted intrigue and perpetual deceit ; to consider the great interests of humanity as not requiring to be supported by ignorance and superstition ; to believe that suppression and concealment can be of no service, except to the few at the expense of the many ; and that every important question should be freely and boldly examined.

20. It is owing to the progress of knowledge that human conduct and human happiness have made that improvement which the comparison of the present with the past time displays. If we can but succeed in the increase and diffusion of knowledge, we shall witness a far more rapid advancement. We have every motive, therefore, which can actuate the breasts of men animated by the love of their fellow-men, to stimulate our exertions in the great work of education.

21. Pursuits which partake of science afford pleasures within the reach of those who are almost in any circumstances. Every one may be placed within the reach of moral and intellectual gratifications, whereby they may be rendered healthier, happier, better in all respects—an improvement which will not be more beneficial to them as individuals than to the whole body of the commonwealth.

22. This mental revolution may best be effected by a wise education, that is, by an early intellectual and moral cultivation of the rising generation, preventing superstition and hereditary error from having access to the mind ; and for doctrinal creeds and empirical tuition, we must substitute instruction in sensible science.

23. The human mind, stored by means of the study of proper subjects, with just and worthy ideas, will possess a faculty of reflection that shall form a source of delight to which millions in every age have been perfect strangers.

24. A harmonious union of man with nature, and a spirit of peaceful communion with the universe, are generated by the researches of science.

25. The minds which we endeavour to enlighten, we must gradually familiarize with those clearer conceptions, and endeavour to fill their hearts and understandings with a lively interest for truth.

26. To endeavour to raise human character in the moral and intellectual scale of being, is one of the most honourable and laudable employments in which the human exertions can be engaged.

27. In this age of base, blind, and blundering quackery, when ignorance, folly, and “ *orthodoxy* ” seek to deprave the young ; let every man who wishes to do his heart good, promote a system of education at once rational in its principles, powerful in its machinery, and rapid in its effects ; may it become the model of hundreds of others all over the land, till presumption and superstition be ousted from their many strong holds, and wise art lend her aid in gradually extending and enlightening the intelligence of the people.

28. Enlightened men should be spread over the country as instructors, instead of formal pedants and miserable fanatics who issue from their seminaries to bewilder that people, who, in spite of all manner of cant and hypocrisy practised with regard to them, are beginning to see their way.

29. Rational education—the spreading of truth—these are the great instruments of good to mankind. For these let us toil; for these let us excite others to toil; and let it be set up as a mark at which every philanthropist should aim—not to pass out of the world without having performed for the cause of knowledge and freedom whatever it is in his power to perform.

30. Let every manly and just heart set itself vigorously to the accomplishment of its task, in rending the veil of superstitious ignorance which the artful priesthood have drawn over the country.

31. As the corner-stone of the temple of Freedom—as the only foundation on which it can rest—we are for knowledge, acquired by all means and obtained at all hands; nor are we likely to conclude that that can be made a prop of the superstition, without which not even the liberty of conscience can exist.

32. In all their interest, intellectual, moral, and political, men require to be instructed, and the necessity of mental and moral science is founded in this very want of man's nature.

33. Priestley wrote, nearly in the following words:—A sense of political and civil liberty gives to man a proper feeling of his own importance and rights; and it is the foundation of his exercising a free, bold, and manly turn of thinking unrestrained by the most distant ideas of control. Being free from all fear, he has the most perfect enjoyment of that personal conduct—the use of his reason and expression of his sentiments—which is his due.

34. It is the natural effect of accumulating experience, to extend the field of man's free and unfearing agency; no limits confine human enterprise but those which exist in the nature of things.

35. Integrity is the portion and proper good of him who loves liberty.

2.

1. The reason why truth is shewn to men in general almost in vain, is this;—they judge of it not by any conviction which it leaves on their own minds, but by the impression which is made upon them by the tone of those, with whom they associate; they do not consider the truth in their own hearts, they only adopt the notions entertained by others.

2. As those books are calculated to sell best, which flatter prevailing opinions and support vested interests, so few publications contain the whole truth and “nothing but the truth.” Original thinking is subdued by deference to existing authorities.

3. Prejudice, selfishness, and vanity, not unfrequently combine to

resist improvement, and often engage no inconsiderable degree of talent in drawing back, instead of pushing forward, the machine of science. Men do not like to descend from the stations they formerly occupied, to take lower grades in the scale of intellectual enlargement, and then enmity is likely to be directed against methods by which their vanity is mortified and their conceit or consequence lessened.

4. The covetuous man fears for the safety of his possessions, and thinking laws and civil institutions not sufficiently compulsory he gets highly alarmed, and wishes to keep, at least, religious fears and hopes, for the sake of his own security, in credit as long as possible; he willingly pays his share for teaching doctrines to his fellow men that may keep them still more in awe. But again, man finds his fellow men act the hypocrite like himself, pay also their shares to the same purpose, profess one thing and do another, and are as cunning as himself. Is any one so simple as not to know that all the fine religious hopes and fears do not affect the actions of men?

5. There are always great numbers who, from habit, indolence, indifference, or fear, are the determined supporters of what is "established," whether in practice or opinion.

6. To these the constitution of the universities, so entirely subjected to the church, has added a numerous and "learned" phalanx, interested to preserve the old systems, and to resist all truth, which might endanger their "authority," disturb their repose, or what is a stronger motive, affect their pockets or annul their patents. Universities are the fastnesses, from which error and prejudices are latest in being expelled. The "Clergy" are ever found ranging themselves, as "spiritual" Janissaries, around the thrones of absolute power.

7. The free play of intellect proving injurious to monopolies of power and wealth, and to the selfish privileges of professional superstitionists or "religionists," governmental oppression has always been opposed to the advance of knowledge, and it has either limited or neutralized inquiry. The age has not yet arrived when the pursuit of moral science may be perfectly free; and its advancement has hitherto been determined by limits prescribed by tyranny, or by prejudices inculcated by pulpit-craftsmen, and operating directly or insidiously so as to say,—“thus far thou mayst go, but no farther.”

8. One might infer, from practice, that the object of "government," instead of being the common-weal, was the supporting of "the interest of the Church," and to suppress the free expression of truths that might operate in exposing "religious" imposture. "Sacred" deception must be protected by "government."

9. Literary institutions in general are close corporations very unfavourable to originality of thought and to the advance of knowledge beyond the prescribed and beaten track. They are usually governed by ancient authorities and by prejudices of the education of the senior or leading member. Hence having a certain weight

with the vulgar, they impede the march of genius; they are jealous of all "innovations," and guard with vigilance the "faith." Thus they give countenance to ignorance, and serve as engines to keep knowledge within the limits prescribed by "established" and ecclesiastical power. All old and pampered institutions hate novelty, and tremble lest their monopoly should be shaken.

10. Universities are favourable only to the propagation of the notions of the previous age or ages, and to the perpetuating of professional, or paid-for opinions. They preserve the studies and cast-off opinions which were enacted at the era of their foundations, and usually proscribed all discussions and free inquiry into their accuracy. In collegiate education, changes of system do not keep pace with the general improvements; so that the students do not acquire the know- of their own age, but only the notions of a previous age, or of the tutors' tutors.

11. With respect to the adopting of new opinions or the discovery of truth, we must be indebted, in the last resort, either to books or to the oral communications of our fellow-men, or to the ideas immediately suggested to us by the phenomena of man or of nature. The two former are the ordinary causes of a change of judgment; minds of a superior class only are susceptible of hints derived straight from the external world, without the understanding of other men intervening and serving as a conduit to the new conceptions introduced. The two former serve for the education of man, and enable us to master, in our own persons, the points already secured, and the wisdom laid up in the great magazine of human knowledge; the last imparts to us the power of adding to the stock, and carrying forward the improvements of which we are susceptible.

12. All that men have devised, discovered, done, felt, or imagined, lies recorded in books, wherein whoso reads may find it and appropriate it.

13. Without records, knowledge is personal and evanescent, while, by those means, the knowledge of one generation is added to that of another, and it accumulates by a law of acceleration.

14. To attempt bringing the minds of men to the same level, to bestow upon all an equal delicacy of perception, or the same accuracy of judgment, would be as chimerical as the wild project of universal fraternity. The nature of man does not admit of absolute modes, and his best destiny seems to be an indefinite approximation to perfection which he can never attain. No hope of perfectibility can be indulged. Events will continue in future ages, as in times past, to revolve within a certain orbit. The storm of passion cannot be allayed by any magic of words; the bitterness of opposition cannot be sweetened by any dictates of philosophy; yet surely, by stating the principles upon which men and nations may appreciate ideas that seem capable but of one single value, some prejudices may be diminished and some animosities appeased. Did not the endless diversity of human disposition make language as various and caprici-

ous as itself, or could greater precision be used in exhibiting character, some healing assimilations might be hoped for among the jarring opinions of mankind.

15. The most advantageous situation in which men can be placed seems to be that in which they are surrounded by superable difficulties. Where there are no difficulties, there is no stimulus to exertion; where the difficulties are insuperable, there is no hope of success.

16. In the absence of difficulties, natural or fictitious, which are great enough to awaken the intellectual powers, and sufficiently superable not to depress hope, the facilities which allow the mind to take repose, and invite the senses to enjoyment, are the promoters of luxury. It is not, indeed, to be expected that, where circumstances have guaranteed easy prosperity, and customary formalities habituated a congregated display, "religion" will soon resign its place to reason, or that rich and "very genteel" persons will readily turn aside from the luxury of artifice and forms, to embrace the austerity of thought.

17. Those efforts of the mind are most healthful and vigorous in which the possessors of talents administer to themselves, and contend with the difficulties and obstacles that arise,—

"————— Throwing them aside,
And stemming them with hearts of controversy."

18. The struggle after knowledge is full of delight; it is a fine thing to remember that we have gained it by our own energies. The intellectual chace brings fresh vigour to our pulses, and infinite palpitations of a strange and sweet suspense. The idea that is gained with effort affords far greater satisfaction than that which is acquired with dangerous facility. We dwell with more fondness on the perfume of the flower that we have ourselves attended, than on the odour of that which we cull with carelessness and cast away without remorse.

19. The strength and delight of knowledge depend upon the impression which it makes upon our own minds. It is the liveliness of the ideas that it affords which renders research so fascinating; so that a trifling fact or deduction, when discovered or worked out by our own brain, affords us far greater pleasure than a more important truth obtained through the exertion of another.

20. The most valuable part of every man's education is that which he receives from himself, especially when the active energy of his character makes ample amends for the want of a more finished course of study.

21. How many minds—almost all the great ones—were formed in secrecy and solitude, without knowing whether they should ever make a figure or not. All they knew was, that they liked what they were about, and gave their whole mind to it.

22. Excited mental activity operates as a counterpoise to the stimuli of sense and appetite. The new world of ideas, the new views of the relations of things, the physical properties and mechanical powers disclosed to the well-informed mind, present attractions which,

unless the character is deeply sunk, are sufficient to counterbalance the taste for frivolous or corrupt indulgences; and thus, in the end, a standard of character is created in the community, which, though it does not invariably save each individual, protects the virtue of the mass.

23. Instances have frequently occurred of individuals, in whom the power of imagination has, even at an advanced period of life, been found susceptible of culture to a wonderful degree. In such men, what an accession is gained to their pleasures! What delights are added to their perceptions! The mind of him who had lost, in vulgar occupations and frivolous amusements, his earliest and most precious years, awakening, as if from a trance, to a new existence, becomes introduced to the most interesting aspects of life and nature; the intellectual eye is "purged of its film," and things the most familiar and unnoticed disclose charms that had been invisible before; the same objects and events which had been beheld with indifference, occupy now all the powers and capabilities of the intellect; and the contrast between the present and the past serves only to enhance and endear so unlooked for an acquisition.

24. The greater number of the more pleasing expectations conferring the greater degree of happiness, it will necessarily follow that the scale of happiness will ascend in proportion to the degree of intellect; and he who possesses the greatest share of the latter will succeed to the largest share of the former; unless, indeed, that superiority of intellect is powerfully counteracted by extraneous habits; because, the more enlarged is the intellect, the more extended is the circle of expectation, since the intellectual man has not only the ordinary topics of hope and aspiration, his sensual enjoyments, and the amusements of the mass of mankind, to look forward to, but he possesses also the peculiar energies of genius and talents, which are a never-failing source of the most pleasing anticipations.

25. If men would forsake their luxuries, their ostentatious follies, their deadening superstitions, and would lend all their energies to the improvement of society, it is impossible to calculate the degree of proficiency to which humanity might attain. Let the philanthropist, let the patriot, let the wise and honest man chose understanding as his portion; let him, as he values every thing that is dear in life for himself and his posterity, take his stand and stem the torrents of folly and knavery that would engulf his country and the world in degradation and ruin.

26. Amid the differences that exist in the distribution of property, and the mental weakness and terrors inseparable from ignorance, those who would for one moment confer vantage-ground on the enemies of knowledge and freedom—on a perpetual conspiracy of "*priests*" to monopolize these in their own persons, and trample under foot the rest of the race—are not the friends of humanity.

27. The ministers of "religion;" have been the instruments of oppression and the tools of tyrants for ages. By paralyzing mens' minds;

by depriving them of senses, courage, and freedom ; by blinding them with ceremonies and “ mysteries ;” by rivetting them down in ignorance,—they have fostered and encouraged every demoralizing vice among the people, in order that, by enervating their minds, and burying them in mental death, they might trample upon them as men, and make them subservient to their own mercenary craft.

28. No one but the “ religious” persecutor wreaks his vengeance on involuntary, inevitable, compulsory acts or states of the understanding. Reasonable men apply to every thing which they wish to move, the agent which is capable of moving it,—force to outward substances, arguments to the understanding.

29. Let it ever be remember that popular ignorance is barbarity, and that the learning of the few is despotism, if used to abuse the people.

30. The imposition of “ creeds,” forms, and “ days of worship,” precludes investigation, and entails lies and abuse from generation to generation ; so that a reformation can hardly take place, and men obtain their rights to think and act freely, without struggle and exposure to violence and defamation. If the emoluments of “ Churchman” be considerable, the temptation to prevarication is irresistible. Who among the thousands of the “ clergy” can be supposed such fools as to believe all the articles and doctrines to which they subscribe?

31. Never besides was it contrived to amass together such a contradictory jargon as that heterogeneous jumble which constitutes “ divinity,” and the “ sacred” lies that are pulpitied forth as “ revealed truth.” Those who seek to divert themselves with the history of the most barbarous superstitions such as would be laughed at by the lowest African tribes, have only to peruse the “ holy Bible.”

32. Many of the Bible narratives can only tend to excite ideas the worst calculated for a female breast ; every thing is called roundly by its name ; and the annals of a brothel would scarcely furnish a greater choice of indecent expressions. Yet this is the book which young women are recommended to study, which is put into the hands of children, able to comprehend little more than those passages which but too frequently inculcate the first rudiments of vice, and give the first alarm to the still sleeping passions.

33. It will be said,—“ If all men be brought up slaves to superstition, why not make use of their weakness to inspire them with respect for the laws?” Is it then the superstitious who respect the laws? On the contrary it is they who violate them. Superstition is a polluted source whence issue the many evils and calamities of the earth. The most atrocious villain may be rigidly devout.

34. When licentious “ religion” triumphs over the heart and affections of the *criminal*, there is no limit to the most savage ferocity, nor to the wildest excesses of the basest and bloodiest passion. “ Leave the world” when and how he may, the “ gates of heaven” are open to welcome the “ pious” wretch, and the “ bliss of paradise” sheds

a "glorious and inviting light" over the gloom of his fanatical imagination.

35. It is not only by the atrocious "religious" *tyrant* of political government and "church" that the blood of the freeminded and well-informed has been shed in torrents, but fanaticism, in its blind zeal to effect what it deems a "godly" object, has trampled under foot the most sacred rights of citizens.

36. Philosophy and natural truth might as well be preached to a drunken man, or to the dead, as to those who are under the instigation of "religious" passion.

37. We learn the humiliating lesson,—how dreadful an insanity "non-religion" is; what desperate havoc it makes in the brain; and how entirely and for ever we must take our leave of reason, sobriety, truth, honesty, and independence, or to any expectation of them from any man, when once that cruel disease has seized upon his mind.

38. As the views of philosophy become more comprehensive, as the judgment acquires greater nervosity and confidence, as the light of science shines around us with a broader and more clear effulgence, the narrow prejudices of our forefathers gradually glide along to oblivion. As wisdom advances, the power of the corrupt few must continue in the same proportion to retrograde and become less noxious.

39. Those "wholesome prejudices" that bind the thoughtless to the "religion of their country," will, indeed, lose their influence; and the mysterious but overwhelming charms of bigotry and superstition will, in a great degree, sink to rise no more.

40. There is a time coming when men will not endure injustice, because their fathers have suffered worse. There will be a time when the hoary head of inveterate imposture will neither draw reverence nor obtain protection.

41. The hatred of the "theologians" may still be dreaded at Madrid and Lisbon, but among ourselves that hatred is comparatively impotent; the reproach of "impiety" is no longer regarded with horror; and every accusation of that kind becomes more and more ridiculous, and is considered but as an expression of "religious" rage and malice.

42. A spirit of justice, of freedom, has been extending itself, and has shaken old political institutions; while, at the same time, a spirit of fearless investigation and minute examination into the necessary conditions and operations of nature have broken down old doctrines, and created entirely a new mind.

43. This new mental condition has been continually gaining strength, as those whose judgments were blinded by antiquated prejudices and long-established customs dropped into the tomb, and as the new mental shoots, more or less tinctured with the new sentiments, sprung up to occupy their place.

44. Let those, who are grown rusty in their absolute forms, enter-

tain a childish fear of that moment when just philosophic views shall burst upon them, and in the feeling of age or of weakness, fancy they must perish in the fresh and impetuous stream of brighter and more liberal times.

45. The world, however, is not yet so enlightened as it boasts, and fanaticism and hypocrisy can still hold millions in thrall, and make fools of other millions.

" Yet, yet, degraded man, th' expected day
That breaks your bitter cup is far away ;
Craft, wealth, and fashion, ask you still to bleed,
And ' holy' men give ' scripture' for the deed !" * * *

" Still the cursed creed, which despots all adopt,
While, o'er their table of communion, words
Of blood are written—Tyranny's gospel—
' The world's a prison, and mankind mere slaves.' "

46. One impostor still reigns paramount—that plausible opposition to novel doctrines subversive of ancient dogmas—doctrines which, probably, shall one day be as generally established as at present they are " religiously " decried, and which the prejudices of " churches," on sectarian bodies, oppose with all their cumbrous machinery ; but artificial machinery becomes impeded and perplexed in its movement when worn out by the friction of ages.

47. Nor is it the unintelligent and exceedingly weak-minded alone who are visited by the religious palsy of the mental faculties upon any approach to the mysteries of *creedism*. Men, the shrewdest in every other respect, who, in the reading of any ordinary instrument that might affect their claim to real estate, would not let a syllable escape their criticism, will read their " Bibles " with their eyes shut, and any meaning, or no meaning, will do for *that* that any man may put on it, so that they may be but sufficiently sure that he will not say anything to shake "*our most holy faith*."

48. One of the most arduous and useful researches of mental philosophy would be to explore the subtle illusions which enable minds to satisfy themselves by mere words, before they deceive others by payment in the same counterfeit coin.

49. Priests love " religion " for their own advantage. As the author of " Zillah " so truly says, " Establishments endure longer than opinions ; the Church outlasts the faith which founded it ; and if a priesthood has once succeeded in interweaving itself with the institutions of the country, it may continue to subsist and to flourish long after its form of worship is regarded with aversion and contempt.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER IX. PART II

1.

“ Custom, that tyranness of fools,
That leads the learned round the schools
In magic chains of forms and rules—
My genius storms her throne !
No more, ye slaves, with awe profound,
Beat the dull track and pace the round—
Loose hands and quit the enchanted ground !
Knowledge invites us each alone !”

1. Why should the want of physical courage be marked with infamy, and the absence of moral courage be regarded with complacency? If nations be weak and credulous, will the cowardice of individuals abate the evil? The credulity which renders mankind ductile in error, is equally available to lead them to the adoption of truth; and if all who hold rational opinions would manfully own them, and would teach what is right as perseveringly as the base and corrupt hold forth what they know to be wrong, they are numerous enough to enforce respect, and change the current of public opinion: in all times and among all nations the Republic of thinkers—this interior republic, if we may so speak—has existed, and has been the solace of those generous spirits who have dared to run counter to popular error.

2. The only true and noble intrepidity is that high moral courage which impels a man, when he is called upon by duty, to encounter disgrace or death without flinching—which leads him to disdain life when it can only be purchased by the sacrifice of a principle.

3. To be independent, it is not merely sufficient to be endowed with the feelings of duty and justice as principal motives; these must also be combined with indifference about the opinion of others when unjust—with courage and perseverance, in order to resist all difficulties and obstacles, and attend only to the aim, and to think of the necessary means.

4. It argues a clear and worthy spirit when a man is able to disengage himself from the opinion of others so far as not to let deference towards customary wrong ensnare him to act against the dictates of his reason. But the generality of the world have been, hitherto, so far from walking by any such maxim, that it has been almost a standing rule “to do as others do.”

5. The enthusiasm which leads forward the advanced guard of opinion, but rarely allows an observance of what is merely prudential; and the high-minded votarist of truth shrinks from whatever assumes the aspect of compromise as from degradation.

6. What is termed liberality is so purely the power of seeing clearly and judging sagaciously concerning the actual state of society, its wants and its means, that able men must be liberal men sooner or

later; the ablest men will not wait for the pressure of exigences; there is something in the nerve, and sinew, and circulation, of a man of genius, that forces him on with the age, and leaves him no power of election.

7. Liberality of sentiment is an essential or distinguishing ingredient in the character of a worthy or great mind.

8. The man who is able to rise superior to the errors of his day, deserves a higher meed of honour than he who merely excels in those attainments which are sanctioned by the popular suffrage, and are the objects of popular admiration.

9. All men are bound in duty to examine the subject of truth; to embrace what may appear to them to be *fact*, and to profess what they have so embraced; and, however differing from the "religion" of the day the sentiments so professed may be, no man ought to suffer any inconvenience on that account. To demonstrate truth can never be dangerous, and it is the noblest performance of duty in all men to attempt the discovery of its pure source.

10. Every man ought to possess a disposition freely and impartially to inquire after truth, wherever it is to be found, and to the utmost of his power to encourage the pursuit of it in others.

11. As, by the exercise of our rational faculties in searching after truth, we are not only likely to arrive at it, but to improve in the love of it—in candour and openness to conviction—and are disposed to submit to its influence; so, in proportion as we give up the exercise of our understandings, and resign ourselves to the conduct of human authority, truth loses its charms and its influence over us; we become blind to its clearest evidences and brightest characters, and are thus prepared to be led into the most absurd superstitions.

12. Without some degree of philosophical incredulity, and some disregard to authority, no old established errors can be corrected, or newly-discovered truths be adopted.

13. In proportion as knowledge clears the sight and promotes an active degree of self-reliance in mankind, it renders them less tractable to assumed or perverted authority.

14. We should always observe this rule: to stick to common sense against the world; and whenever a man would persuade us of anything contrary to that, never to be moved by any tricks or fetches of sophistry, let him use never so many.

15. May not *that* man be said to philosophize best who best reduces science of every kind to the principles of common sense?

16. True science is that which teaches us how to increase our enjoyments by making the most of the productions of nature.

17. The only solid science, the only permanent gratification of rational curiosity, is acquired by a patient investigation of sensible relations, and by the most watchful attention to the passing succession of natural events.

18. Facts, however accurately ascertained, may be thrown together so as to present a chaos of heterogeneous and unconnected

elements, confounding the imagination, rather than enlightening the understanding. Facts form the only foundation upon which sound principles can be erected; but in enabling us to judge of the future by the past, facts are of little value until they have been arranged and generalized, and subjected to that inductive process which extends individual experience throughout the infinitude of things, and imparts to human knowledge the character of science.

19. The province of rhetoric, whether meant for an influence on the actions, or simply upon the belief, lies amongst that vast field of cases where there is a *pro* and a *con*, with the question of right and wrong, true or false, distributed between them. Whatsoever is certain, or matter of fixed science, can be no subject for the rhetorician. When it is possible for the understanding to be convinced, no field is open for rhetorical persuasion. Absolute certainty and fixed science transcend and exclude opinion and probability.

20. From the very nature of physics, they form a branch of human knowledge susceptible of receiving gradual consistency; successive labours undermine every part of the temple of science that is not founded upon the solid rock of truth; and while the discoveries of one generation are condensed into the elements of learning for the next, great and permanent additions are made to the domain in which the intellect of man can expatiate.

21. It is alone upon an intimate knowledge of the intellectual functions of man that the philosophy of the human mind can ever become an interesting object to science; and he who is ignorant of the structure on which they depend, must involve himself, when attempting to teach others, in mazes of the deepest obscurity.

22. The philosopher, in his endeavours to emancipate the understanding from the shackles of superstition imposed and riveted by interested and unprincipled hypocrites, and to guard it against the effects of credulity, not only inculcates a knowledge of physical causes, but assigns to moral principle its true human source.

23. Material science, useful and beautiful as it is, must derive its fullest lustre from its subservience to moral science; and moral science, in its turn, may supply new principles to physical research and important aids to its prosecution. The natural gradation, the true proportion of all the sciences, must be understood before the value of any one can be estimated; and nature, not prejudice, must be the demonstrator.

24. How many crimes would be prevented were the physical health studied with relation to the mental and moral! How much suffering would be saved were the mental and moral health studied with relation to the physical!

25. Clear, exact, and certain knowledge, is the commanding motive, the steady and sure impulse to do what is right.

26. Propriety of conduct and agreeable manners being the main supports of social and individual happiness, morality must of course be the great interest of mankind.

27. In general, we find mere moral principles of such weight, that in our dealings with men, we are seldom satisfied with the fullest assurance given us of their zeal in "religion" till we hear something of their moral character.

28. We naturally desire, and feel it right, that truth should be spoken to us, that justice should be done to us, that humanity should be shown to us; nor will our enlightened conscience, or the sense of right in our minds, when not perverted by superstition or vitiated by hatred, suffer us, without the inward pang of self-disapprobation, to be guilty of falsehood, injustice, and inhumanity.

29. As to "atheism," it can have no effect at all towards the setting up of a false species of right and wrong; it cannot be the cause of estimating any thing as fair, right, or deserving, which is the contrary; but it is certain that, by means of "religion," many things the most naturally and morally horrid and inhuman—such as *innocence suffering to atone for guilt*, &c. &c.—come to be received as "sacred," i. e. even more than excellent, good, and laudable in themselves.

30. Creed-born God-Almighty-superstition, so long considered a fundamental principle—having for it every thing that can make a prejudice deep and strong—prescriptive *authority*, vulgar consent—taught in the first lessons of the nurse, and taken for granted in all the exhortations of the priest—to remove which, is to break innumerable associations and give a powerful shock to the mind;—yet even this prejudice, strong as it is, cannot stand in the great day of the deliverance of human reason.

31. Let us reflect upon the happy state of a truly enlightened Republic, where the majority at least had attained to the full use of their intellectual powers, and no longer allowed others to think for them, nor gave themselves up to an irregular play of obscure fancies and feelings, but considered for themselves what it was incumbent for them to do as men and citizens, and distinctly perceived their rights and the duties which followed from their social relations; and how it behoved them to subordinate every other end to the highest end of humanity—that of a progressive increase in moral perfection. In such a state, all true mental cultivation, all arts and sciences, must stand in universal esteem; "religion" would hardly be known but by name, bigotry and fanaticism having fled before the light of philosophy. True moral principle would be received by every individual with conviction; its improving and consoling power would be felt by every heart, and its sacred laws observed by all.

32. Contrasted with such a state, the actual picture of society might be given. A people amongst whom an ancient belief and ancient formalities, which priest-power had enforced on many generations, have now, by the partial exercise of our mental liberties and by the force of attainments made in science, become disputed or ridiculous; a state in which partial enlightenment entirely disturbs the true judgment of human affairs; in which the noblest feelings are paralysed and the heart chilled towards everything free and natural; where a

vain rancy of sectarian conceit and distinction had dissolved the most sacred bonds that unite man to man—leaving the mind susceptible of nothing but a narrow selfishness disposed to war with every thing that does not flatter the idol of a perverse and ignorant taste. In this state, the earlier dark representations of the imagination have now grown contemptible, without having been replaced by clearer conceptions.

33. Our fathers, it would seem, lived in the twilight of the world, when the decaying tree stump, or the mis-shapen rock, assumed inspired forms; when every blast whispered of mystery, and every foot-fall sounded unearthly; when there was just light enough to awaken curiosity, but not sufficient to gratify it:—but our lives have fallen in the full meridian radiance, when fairies and phantoms disappear, and when mists and mysteries melt before light, less romantic indeed, but more trust-worthy.

34. The great influences which most powerfully operate on the human race—at once developing individual character, and carrying forward the progressive improvement of the species—are those of nation, climate, physical condition or temperament, and lastly of tradition in its most comprehensive sense, as including that common heritage of feelings, opinions, and knowledge; of arts, usages, and institutions, which descends, modifying and modified, through successive generations, bringing the spirit of the past to act on the present and the future, and giving to men of the remotest ages and nations an interest in each others' improvement and happiness. Laws and governments, arts and inventions, are all swept along this broad stream of tradition.

35. The formation and developement of individual character depend on the feelings, the opinions, and usages that have been handed down from former generations, and these constitute a necessary link in that vast traditional chain which connects the universal history of the species. Man is educated by man. His body moulders in the grave, and his name soon becomes a mere shade upon the earth; but his thoughts and character, long after he himself is forgotten, incorporated with that traditional heritage which passes from generation to generation, perpetuate their influence on the future destinies of his race.

36. Man, indeed, in the course of his moral and intellectual developement requires for his higher perfection the aid and co-operation of circumstances; and the civilization of society may place at his disposal more abundant instruments of artificial good. The seeds of improvement are all within him—speech, memory, and reason; but when he has once fallen below a certain grade of culture, they seem incapable of fructifying, till some external stimulus has been applied—till an accession of arts and usages, brought down upon them by the wide stream of tradition, leaves behind, as it were, a rich and fertilizing soil, which shortly quickens them into life.

37. The feelings of mankind have assumed every divarication of

form that could subsist under the varieties of climate, external circumstances and organization; every where, however, the happiness of life does not consist in a stimulating multitude of thoughts and sensations, but rather in the relation which these thoughts and sensations bear to the solid and inward enjoyment of our existence, and that of all we identify with it. Nowhere does the rose of human bliss blossom without thorns; but that which springs up amidst these thorns is, every where and under all shapes, the fair though short-lived flower of human happiness. Millions are living upon the globe, who know nothing of the artificial refinement of our modern states, and yet are in the healthful enjoyment of their minds and bodies and the happiness of their hearts and homes.

38. Father and mother, husband and wife, sister and brother, friend and fellow-man—these are the ties of nature, and in these relationships must we find our happiness.

2.

1. To discover *truth*, is professedly the aim of all; let us pursue the path that seems the most likely to lead us to its true source, with ardour, but not with animosity; and if we are convinced that we have been happy enough to find it out, let us not insult those who, in our estimation, may have been less successful.

2. Let not the freedom of inquiry be shackled. If it multiplies contentions, it exercises the charity of those who contend. If it shakes for a time the *belief* that is rooted only in *prejudice*, it finally settles the *knowledge* that rests on the more solid basis of *conviction*.

3. Truth possesses charms which an honest and good heart finds it difficult to resist; it forces into its favour a sound and refined judgment; it sooner or later brings a wise and exalted mind into its interests.

4. The passions may for a time seduce, example may mislead; but truth at length penetrates the cloud, and, in an honest heart, occupies the place of all the trifles which had previously allured or amused it. Wearied through running for a long time after a shadow and chimera, we wish for something certain and real. Only a feeble and superficial mind can remain till the last under delusion.

5. A noble theme is,—the gradual changes in public opinion; the utter annihilation of certain false notions, like those of “witchcraft,” “astrology,” “spectres,” and many other superstitions, the hideous progeny of imposture begot on ignorance and by audacity on fear. The days also of “inspiration,” like those of chivalry, have passed away.

6. There is sufficient evidence that objects of the highest importance to mankind, on their first appearance, were slighted and condemned. Posterity smiles at the ineptitude of the preceeding age, while it becomes familiar with those objects which that age had so contemptuously rejected.

7. All the discoveries made within the last-century were ridiculed and treated with disdain by our forefathers; yet, at the present day, there are many who are equally embittered by prejudice and hostile to all those improvements proposed to us, and which will in all probability, be adopted by our children.

8. Time is the tardy patron of truth, or knowledge. Time, that great and bloodless revolutioner, has effected, through the medium of opinion, many beneficial changes. Penal "laws" of the most atrocious kind, were, at no distant period past, the best means of "propagating the faith." The man who dared to be rational, and aspired to be free, was tortured and murdered.

9. When science and philosophy are diffused through any country, the system of superstition there prevailing is subjected to a scrutiny from which it had previously been exempt,—and opinions spread which imperceptibly diminish its influence over the minds of men. A free and full examination is always favorable to truth, but fatal to error. What is received with implicit "faith" in ages of darkness, will excite contempt or indignation in an enlightened period.

10. Philosophers—reasoners—have been called "unbelievers;" but unbelievers of what? Of the fictions imposed on the imagination; of "divinities," "demons," "spiritual powers,—the invisible or supernatural fry;—of "miracles," "prophecies," "mysteries," and an endless variety of "religious," or unnatural follies. These "sacred" impostures they have detected and despised; but they have always bound their hearts to truth and nature

11. What is it the priest would "punish" in a "heretic," "infidel," or "unbeliever"? The "audacity" of the man who would enjoy his natural rights; who should "dare" think for himself; who will listen to his own reason rather than "believe" in the dogma of the "church."

12. When men have unhappily been born and bred to slavery; they are so far from being sensible to the degradation of their life, or of that ill-usage, indignity, and misery they sustain, that they even admire and boast of their own condition, and carrying their views no farther than those bounds which are early prescribed to them, they look upon Tyranny as a natural case, and think mankind in a sort of dangerous and degenerate state when in possession of free thought and speech:

"The wrongs by tyrants' craft contrived,
By villains' boldness perpetrated,
By coward-slaves borne tamely, and, oh shame!
Praised and perpetuated by hirelings."

13. The human mind is slow in learning the meaning of the "principles of mental liberty." Ages after ages have men stupidly been proceeding with comparatively small improvement, and have submitted to the suffering of oppressions and miseries almost indescribable; all for want of adopting them. When brought to light, these principles have been opposed and rejected by the sordid class who profit by

Her gaudy spoil, and else, insatiate sway ;
 For this, with trappings decks thy fabling fanes,
 With incense fumes them, and with offerings loads ;
 Then bares her arm, and brandishes the bolt,
 And calls ' blasphemers ' all who dare to doubt
 Thy mystic dreams and lying oracles."

* * * * *
 " ————— Thou, Reason, thou,
 Whose genuine inspiration in our hearts
 Makes revelation of the sole true faith ;
 Whose attribute is pure philanthropy,
 Unlimited by sect, or rank, or tribe,
 Tint of a skin, or colour of a creed,
 'Tis thou art the ' *blasphemer*,' whose free voice
 The juggler fears, and superstition hates ;
 For thou wouldst mar their traffic. Thou hast need
 Of neither ' priests ' nor ' altars ; ' need'st not buy
 The ' *way to heaven* ' with ' *prayers* ' of pampered drones,
 Who preach up abstinence, with luxury gorged."

20. The first and immediate effect of " religious " restrictions and ceremonies universally is, to produce a prostration of spirit, and an implicit submission to " authority " and ascendancy ; and the very act of chaining down attention to a slavish and mute acquiescence in a routine of antic observances and " *divine service*," naturally cramps the mind of man, and produces false associations in respect to the relative importance of duties.

21. If any one criterion were to be taken of the measure of national morality, it would be the value allowed to truth—to moral liberty. In proportion as truth is sought and appreciated, the virtue of mankind increases.

22. Mental liberty—free reason—is one of the greatest enjoyments of life ; without it life itself is a burden, rather than happiness ; for, what is every other enjoyment when this is taken away ? If the citizens be prohibited the free exercise of their capacities, deprived of their natural rights, what are they better than mere machines ?

23. As all men have a right to their senses and limbs, and may use them in what manner soever they please, that is not injurious to society, so they have an equal right to profess opinions, or observe or not observe " religious " practices, according to their own views and inclinations ; and no man can interrupt or restrain them without involving himself in the crimes of encroachment and persecution.

24. Those who claim the unmolested independency and improvement of their minds, cheerfully allow the same benefit to all mankind, as belonging to their natural constitution, as existing wherever man exists, as a right of which no man can be deprived without the worst kind of usurpation and violence.

25. The man who interests himself in the cause of truth must have a mean opinion of its sacredness, if the very consciousness of having done nobly does not supply him with courage, and give him that simple unostentatious firmness which shall carry immediate conviction to the heart.

26. The world, though insolent and rash attackers, are cowards ;

they will yield to those who stand firm. Perseverance, provided it be free from absurdity, will succeed at last. To give way is to confirm and secure persecution. Why should we regard calumnies? Why should we fear pulpit denunciations? We know whether our intentions are good; we know what is the degree of our strength; we know the depths of those fountains of truth from which our mind draws its resources. If we are conscious that all is right, why be silenced or fear? The scorn of the dull, the foolish, the ignorant, and the mercenary, is but the signal of their own worthlessness and of our triumph. The worldly are the basest of mankind. Independence and disinterestedness of spirit are among the most admirable and elevated of moral qualities. They encourage the exertion of our faculties without exhausting them; while a pusillanimous awe of those who endeavour to assume a jurisdiction over us which does not belong to them, debilitates us and paralyzes our efforts.

27. The abhorred thing which weighed on us and our fathers like an incubus, the terrific and fearful "Jehovah"—the horrid Jewish juggernaut—surrounded by dark waters and thick clouds, having lubberly horns coming out of his hands, emitting fumes from his nostrils, and flames from his mouth, scattering burning coals with his feet, whose eyes were as a flame of fire, out of whose jaws went a sharp two-edged sword, whom blood alone propitiated, who at once crushed, besmeared, and consumed us, has been stricken and is become like chaff of the threshing-floor.

28. Conceited, selfish, grasping, tyrannical "religion" is exposed in the turpitude of its character;—monstrous in its objects, false in its principles, and wretchedly mischievous in its tendencies. The rational faith is expressed in a short creed,—"*belief in the natural world.*"

29. The people never will again bow down at the shrine of a mute spirit-idol; no matter of what ancient reverence it may be—no matter how profound and solemn the mysteries with which it was wont to be cultivated and surrounded—no matter how deeply hoary superstition may have sanctified all its precincts. In the stern realities which furnish forth the world of thought, there is no longer a spot "*tabooed*;" there is no longer fane or shrine held in blind unsearching reverence. Knowledge has brought us back to the fitting and natural state of things; all the monstrous productions of the successive struggles from night and ignorance, to the bursting forth of the grand intellectual light of wisdom, science, and power, have crumbled into dust. The antique barriers which impitiously and tyrannically divided mankind into castes have been all swept away; the institutions and the policy which lent them strength, and enabled them to hem in and bear down hopelessly the hereditary multitude of bondsmen, to whom neither knowledge, nor valour, nor honour, was permitted, have been all laid prostrate. The edifices, military and ecclesiastical, which were the gigantic symbols of the system, and of the state of society and of mind under that system, may remain, but

the thought and the spirit, the feeling and the soul, which animated them are fled: the vast meteor of despotic tradition waxes dim before the enlarging orb of human reason. The press has been gradually achieving all this; it has been working as a subtle solvent, still going on and onwards amidst difficulties and dread opposition, until at last it has dissolved the frame of the antique policy of states and altered the whole aspect of the social system.

30. It is a long process to disseminate the truth amongst a whole nation. The men who are aggrieved by it must have time to grow accustomed to it; the young who receive it eagerly should have time to grow into men; the old must arrive at their season of retirement. In short, if the grain is not sown until harvest time, where will be the crop?

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER X. PART II.

1.

1. All the changes that are hourly and gently going on in spite of us, and all those which we ought to make in order that violent severances of settled relations may not be effected, instead of filling us with a thoughtless and preposterous alarm, should be gladly hailed as salutary reform.

2. The great stream of life is perpetually flowing on; all things around us, with ourselves, are in ceaseless motion; and we vainly imagine to preserve our relative position stationary among them, by merely getting out of the current, and standing stock-still on the margin.

3. The desire of knowledge spreads with each effort made to satisfy it. The sacred thirst after science is becoming epidemic, and we look forward to the day when an acquaintance with the properties of matter and of mind shall no longer be deemed the distinction of a few superior minds, any more than being able to read and write now constitutes, as once it did, the title to scholarship; when the human countenance shall beam with the expression of sentiment, of intelligence, of moral worth, and of liberty, instead of remaining shrouded under the veil of ignorant conceit, doubtful mystery, fearful dependence, and hypocritical affectation of enjoying an imputed sanctity.

4. The precepts of knowledge are with difficulty extricated from error; but, once discovered, they gradually pass into maxims and practice; as, to-day, the common mechanic may equal in science, however inferior in genius, the friar whom his contemporaries feared as a magician; so, the opinions which now startle as well as astonish us, may be received hereafter as acknowledged principles, and pass into ordinary conduct.

5. What effects have been produced upon morals by lighting up the torch of reason and searching after knowledge? Happily some barbarous prejudices have been banished. Wills are no longer void which leave nothing to the church; churches no longer serve as

sanctuaries for assassins; and men will never again desert their helpless families to join the banners of the mad crusader.

6. Conceptions and positions most distinctly comprehended, and adopted with the full conviction of their truth, are not to be compared, as to their intensive power, with notions and opinions adopted solely upon authority or from a mere prejudice in favour of antiquity. A man of firm principles will not allow himself to be induced by example, by the love of imitation, by praise, or by the censure or derision of others, to give up his practical conviction and the maxims adopted upon pure reason.

7. In reply to the simplicity or cunning of those who, being interested by a lucrative profession, or not having experienced the feelings of satisfaction and confidence supplied by the attainment of certainty in their knowledge of the physical economy of the world, and who are not sensible of virtue as being itself a means of happiness—who are not aware of the sufficiency of those necessary motives existing in their sensible relations to impose moral restraints from evil and yield inducements to propriety, without being influenced by the unnatural fears and hopes relating to some mysterious thing imagined to exist beyond moral possibility,—and of those who resort to the plea that it is desirable not to disturb the faith of the ignorant who derive support from their religious faith and reliance, even though their trust were but superstition,—we rejoin, that the same plea would always have served in excuse for perpetuating the darkest and grossest species of devotion, and would apply as well even to the case of happy hallucination enjoyed by the lunatic, whom to deprive of his illusion and restore to his senses, would be not less cruel than the supplying reason to the fanatic.

8. There is that in the naked perceptions of truth which is far more wholesome and invigorating to the mind than in all the glowing colours of fancy, however allied with self-flattering illusions.

9. There is an enjoyment in the convictions that are founded on assured principles, far beyond the most overweening notions and illusory rhapsodies; for mystery, doubt, and uncertainty, hang heavily even on the ecstasies of the fictitious. Under the influence of knowledge and moral improvement, the intellect is a great power for the happy guidance of human life; and where these have not been wanting, the highest talent has been found in the happiest men: so generally united are genius, virtue, and felicity.

10. As every quality which is useful or agreeable to ourselves or others is, in common life, allowed to be a part of personal merit, so no other will ever be received where men judge of things by their natural and unprejudiced reason without the delusive glosses of superstition.

11. If philosophy awakens in man a sense of his true condition and duties; if it fills him with strength of mind and courage to elevate himself above the pleasures and adversities of life, so as neither to be enslaved to sensual enjoyments nor depressed by their loss; if

it purifies our inclinations, tames our passions, and submits our desires to the guidance of reason; if it thus secures peace of mind, it undoubtedly contributes to the true and lasting happiness of mankind.

12. Philosophy not only makes a man acquainted with himself as a sensitive, intelligent, and moral being, subject to wants, but it also supplies him with precepts for attaining the various enjoyments of his nature. It tends to the acquirement and preservation of happiness by correctly defining its conceptions, and fixing the value of every kind of gratification in proportion as it adds to the sum of our well-being upon the whole of our existence. It shows the great advantages of mental pleasures—those of a cultivated understanding, of a good, benevolent, and noble heart, and of a refined imagination and taste,—in comparison with indulgences that merely delight the senses; because the former are more within our power, and may be longer enjoyed; neither do they tire, or excite disgust by satiety.

13. Philosophy teaches us to regulate all our endeavours after happiness according to a rational plan, partly by a carefully calculating prudence, and partly by a wise subordination of our self-love to the *laws of morality*.

14. The lights which philosophy affords can alone guard against the various errors to which he is exposed who chooses mere feeling and example for his guides. This determines according to the eternal principles of practical reason upon the rights and duties of men in their mutual relations.

15. The strict laws of morality, derived from practical reason itself, alone render true virtue possible.

16. It ought to be written on the tablets of our hearts, in characters not to be effaced by ambition, avarice, or pleasure, that the only sure and certain happiness is a consciousness of our own rectitude. All peace and joy is the gift of virtue, and there is no applause in the world worth having unless it is crowned with our own.

17. There is, perhaps, no condition from which a man conscious of his own uprightness cannot derive consolation; for it is, in itself, a consolation for him to find that he can bear that condition with calmness and fortitude.

“Happy the man! Alone thrice happy he

Whose courage from the deeps of knowledge springs,
Nor vainly fears inevitable things.”

18. The external circumstances which, by opposing man to natural evils, elevate and exalt his character, produce a very contrary effect when they act through his misconceptions of their fancied mysterious causes. Of physical evil the senses can judge with precision, and the individual, measuring his sufferings by his powers of resistance, acquires courage through the consciousness of internal strength; but between man and the intangible and inscrutable agents with which fear and ignorance people the universe, to “ride the whirlwind and direct the storm,” there is no comparison. An intimate feeling of

feebleness and prostration debase and degrade him; and there is nothing so absurd and revolting that he will not attempt, in the anguish of his despair, to appease the phantom with which he cannot contend

19. Instead of creating ideal deities of all their fears and fancies, mankind should regard each other as the sole objects of interest and sympathy.

20. Loathers of reason, proscribing those who impart *irreligious* knowledge, arrogate a privilege for their own notions to be held in supreme respect, and would force all others to adopt them.

21. What can be more honourable than labours devoted to the cause of mankind?—to brave the present censures of men for their future benefit?—to bear with the arrogance of those who weigh in the shallow scale of their meagre knowledge the product of arduous thought?—to struggle against the prejudice and bigoted delusion of the bandaged and priest-fettered multitude, to whom, in our fond hopes and aspirations, we trusted to give light and freedom, seeing that the enslaved minds we would have redeemed from error and misery clank their chains at us in ire—made criminal by our very benevolence!

22. When we are informed how an infinite universe, morally denying itself to comprehension, *can* be comprehended by mind—how universally existing races of material beings that possess the attribute of perpetuity could be produced from previous nonentity—how mental faculties which result from material conformation could have existed as nothing, and from nothing have conjured into existence an order of being extending beyond the possibility of moral conception—and how light could be spoken up by some *spirit* that had eternally until a moment, about six thousand years ago, been groping on the face of the waters in darkness—when, indeed, we shall have lost our common sense and our present knowledge, we may possibly become the dupes of the ministers of reigning superstitions; but while, with our present opinions, as simple moralists, we enjoy redemption from sublunary fears; while we find every natural inducement to entertain in our hearts the purest and sincerest aspirations for excellence, and are disposed to discharge every moral and social duty as worthy citizens; while we find enough to exist, in our domestic and civil relations, for the exercise of all our capabilities of affection and devotion; while our liveliest interest is engaged in the legitimate province of man—the cultivation of science, and our exertions occupied in endeavours to abate the incidental evils of life by modifying and directing those circumstances which arrive home to our actual concerns with that prudential address which is seldom wanting of efficacy,—we shall possess our minds in all innocence, and peace, and comfort, totally regardless of all notions connected with the unnatural and senseless fictions of theology, nor a moment disturbing ourselves about that inevitable termination of our ideal functions which insensibly shall close the fleeting period of our con-

sciousness, and without wasting a moment in making vain preparations for an illusory ascension to join celestial choirs above.

“Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away.”

23. What possible problem can mankind have to solve but one? How to make themselves conjointly as happy, and for that purpose, as noble-minded, as virtuous, and as intelligent as they can, during the short term of their existence.

24. A cultivated mind lives with gratification and dies with solace, in proportion to the liberal affections which it has exercised, the solid good which it has achieved or endeavoured to accomplish, the sound knowledge and sentiment which it has communicated, the beauties of the pages it has read with perfected taste, and the excellencies of nature and art which it has comprehended.

25. Opulent and nervous intellect replenishes and invigorates the head, as strong and generous sentiment vivifies and improves the heart.

26. No importance attaches to opinions exterior to the essential mind and being. Pure morals, warm hearts, good tempers, fond or generous sympathies, rich understandings, practical virtue, salutary action, or utility,—these are the real treasures and delights of human existence.

27. We should never forget that to be useful in life is the business of life.

28. Who is it, that is placed out of the reach of the highest of all gratifications—that of exercising the generous affections, and that cannot add to his own happiness by contributing something to the improvement, welfare, or enjoyment of others?

29. Leisure, if well used, is the happy privilege of appropriating, at the choice of our own discretion, and according to the best, highest, purest, wisest suggestions of our hearts and understanding, the measures of the swift span of mortal existence—of stamping on hour, day, month, and year, as they fleet by, acts of self-chosen, virtuous endeavour—bright labours of useful and yet noble thought.

30. The grand characteristic, not only of wisdom, but likewise of sanity, in the individual, is,—he continually refers to the fruits of his past conduct for his guidance in the present and the future.

31. The penalties of nature bring their solace in their necessity; but what shall console for the falling off from principles of genius and sensibility?

32. The last wretchedness of a vicious man is, by habit, to become insensible to remorse.

33. The first advantages which philosophy promises, are, a just sense of the rights of mankind—humanity, and a sociable disposition; from which advantages singularity, sectarian and dissimilar manners, will entirely exclude us. Let us beware lest those peculiarities by which we hope to excite their admiration, should expose us to the contempt and ridicule of mankind.

34. Really fine manners reside in benignity of heart and ease of deportment, the consciousness of desert and the absence of all pretension—to which must be added that facility of speech, emotion, and deportment, which is never coarse, seldom ungraceful.

35. The last touch of perfection in civilization, is a just appreciation of the truths of nature.

36. The sages of the earth, to whom the book of nature and life is outspread, are estated with intellectual riches and rank, and become the teachers and lights of the world.

37. Were it not for the few wise, and discerning, and benevolent spirits of successive ages who know truth and teach it, there is no ground to believe that information, attainable only by the understanding, would ever have been so generally diffused as to influence the mass of a nation.

2.

“Hypocrisy and custom make their minds
The fanes of many a worship now outworn.”

1. We have fallen upon one of those occasional crises in the history of mankind—one of those periods when an eagerness, if not a necessity, for a change in their situation seizes on many nations; the philosopher may observe an agitation among the human species approximating to that which the instinct of the lower animals inspires in them at the approach of some convulsion of the elements, or at the eve of some planetary phenomenon.

2. A deep movement agitates the universal mind, though as yet no one can foresee the exact issue; only that heavings and eddyings, confused and conflicting tendencies, work unquietly everywhere; the movement is begun and will not stop, but the course of it is yet far from being ascertained.

3. Looking out on the long and many-coloured array of ghostly domination and licentious religionism, as it stretches its line across plains and hills, we discern movement; but it is the stir of retreat. Encampments are breaking up, barriers are trampled upon, standards are furred, the clarion of dismay is sounded.

4. The present is a period of transition and universal scepticism, when the older beacons which aroused the devotional feelings of mankind have substantially departed, and have left only shadowy resemblances in their stead.

5. Nothing more remarkably distinguishes the religious state of mankind in our times, as compared with any other eras concerning which history enables us at all to form an opinion, than the air of dotage which belongs, without exception, to every one of the leading superstitions of the nations. In comparing the present and the past religious conditions of all classes of the human family, it is quite manifest that the dimness and the incertitude, and the terrors of extreme age, have come upon all their superstitions. All the old

idolatries have become superannuated, and are decaying with age. The force of the fanaticism they once engendered is spent. There have been times when, if some were on their wane, others were in full vigour, or just starting forth from their cradle with giant strength. During the lapse of the last four-and-twenty centuries this has been the case in each period. In each there was one or more forms of religious imposture which very firmly grasped the minds of the nations that were its victims. Although our knowledge of the human race is now incomparably more extensive and accurate than ever has been heretofore possessed, we can descry in no direction a young, and hale, and mantling religious delusion, such as threatens to become invasive, or which attracts the eyes of mankind by the signal proofs it is giving of its sway over the imagination, and over the turbulent passions of our nature. The contrary is the fact, and it is so in every zone. It is conspicuous that the "*demons*" are holding the reins of their power with a tremulous hand; they are less the objects of terror, and are less often, and less largely, propitiated with human blood and human sufferings! The spirit of counsel and might has left them; the spirit of adventure and of bold assumption has also departed. It seems as if there were neither concert nor courage in the halls of "spiritual" dominion. The priest is less a despot than he was, and more a mercenary; yea, and symptoms have appeared, even among the "reverend" classes, of incredulity and reason.

6 The fact will hardly be disputed of the now antiquated and infirm state of every existing priestcraft. Not only is every extant form of "religion" ancient—most of them immemorially so—but every form is imbecile as well as old; or, if we would seek a phrase that should describe the present condition of "religions" universally, we find it in the expression, "*The superstitious errors of mankind are now antiquated and in their dotage.*"

7. The decrepitude of superstition has been rapidly accelerated of late; the powers of its life have sunk apace, and mortal symptoms have appeared in quick succession. Dare we so far penetrate futurity as to add, "*It is ready to vanish away?*"

8. There are those who, in looking abroad upon mankind at the present moment, would indulge the belief that, as ignorance is disappearing, the instinct of "religion" in the human mind is wearing out; that the habit of worship—of mental prostration—is about to be obliterated; or that an age or more to come shall see nation after nation renouncing both the forms and the substance of its regard to fancied "invisible powers."

9. Superstition may gradually fade away by shades, and it is not improbable it may entirely vanish, ceasing to be an object of interest further than as furnishing a singular trait in the moral history of the species,—

" Flown, like the nightmare's hideous shapes, away,
Full many a horrible worship, that, of old,
Held o'er the shuddering realms unquestioned sway.

10. There is not an old profession that has not worn out its forms ; yet so many persons have an *interest*, or a prejudice, in preserving them, and so much delusion is solemnly kept up respecting them, that there will scarcely be a change without a struggle, in spite of the obviousness of the public advantage.

11. We trust and believe with exulting confidence that the days of national ignorance are numbered—that its fate is written in the firm resolves and consolidated purposes of those real benefactors of their species, who acknowledge no principle of union, no ties of affectionate respect, so strong as that which binds them in the common determination to scatter far and wide the benefits of useful knowledge.

12. We may calculate on all the arts of professional mystery-mongers being enlisted into the service of “established” nonsense and trickery ; with a religion-characterizing horror of all innovation, the contest between intellect and ignorance will be conducted on the principles approved by scholastic and hereditary pretenders ; cunning and timidity, the colleagues of ignorance, will be called to aid the “church” in her hour of danger and tribulation, and a “holy alliance” of these sublime confederates, supported by subsidies from prosperous self-interest and pompous formality, may enable “religion” yet to drag on a languid existence.

13. But surely the day will come when irrational opinions, canting “creeds,” and professional humbug, shall be done away with and scorned by common consent. We are not visionary enough to expect it in our time ; but the tide of information and science *will* sweep them away. Facts and reasons have been promulgated which may require time to apply to general practice, but their working is sure. The mass of discarded folly will then only remain as a museum of distortions for the antiquarian or the philosopher, who would tell what man *has been*.

14. Fanaticism and the tyranny of theocratic opinion has become moderated by the force of enlightenment. This may not appear public, for while all read, all are silent ; still, however, when the slightest occasion to exercise a polemical judgment on disputed points presents itself, the anxiety which exists to examine and learn is immediately displayed.

15. This era of ours, the clashing elements of this most distracted and divided age, may indeed be likened to fabled old chaotic era of world-confusion, and world re-fusion ; of blackest darkness succeeded by a dawn of light and nobler day-spring. To the heart that is faithful to reason let no era be a desperate one.

16. The progress of education is an encouraging feature in the present state of society. The increasing spread of knowledge will be the best security to the *many* for protection against the politic arts, and the oppressive “government” of the *few*. Education and violence are ordinarily inconsistent ; education is the power of knowledge, far more efficient than the power of mere force.

17. Not until the knowledge of natural conditions shall have

become generally diffused, and men shall be morally informed, will there be a successful political revolt from civil wrong, and despotic authority and rapine, under the name of government, cease to be perpetrated.

18. When, from the diffusion of science, natural motives for the practice of social justice and adherence to social order shall be acknowledged, and the maintenance of just social institutions shall be generally established, "religious" illusions and "religious" forms and authorities will cease to be recognized. The understanding sound morals will render superfluous the arts of delusion; fictions, which could only be adopted during an imperfect civilization, will be superseded; men will be guided by reason instead of submitting to fear; and the dominion of truth, unmixed with error, will be erected on the ruins of priest-systematized superstition.

19. Men, by apprehending the inseparable connections between causes and effects, upon which all their capabilities, their intellectual and moral powers depend, will be furnished with motives sufficiently powerful to elevate them above the grovelling sensualities and senseless superstitions of a vicious and fearing age, and will be induced to exercise themselves in habits of thought and reflection, either in the acquisition of knowledge, or in those ordinary avocations of life by which they are likely to place themselves beyond the reach of poverty and distress, and so enjoy their life in health, prosperity, and peace, together with reason and understanding.

20. In proportion as men shall become better acquainted with *things*, they will naturally think less about *persons* and *authorities*.

21. The great and striking difference which marks the intellectual conditions of earlier and later nations, and which characterizes the two leading eras of civilization, is, that the former abounded in "religion," the latter in *reason*. Reason has been increasing, while "religion" has every day been losing the influence which it once had in ruling the concerns of men. The social movement carries us every day farther and farther from the dazzling and vaporous region of imagination into the positive domain of reason and fact. Veracious philosophy, separating pretence and illusion from realities, removes the false glare and semblance of truth with which church-craft had covered her web. Society, in its progress, passes through two stages—one of faith and dogmatism; the other of incredulity, revolution, and justice.

22. That such will continue to be the "march of intellect," cannot well be doubted. The triumph of truth will arrive at that period when the judgments of men generally, as is the case now only partially, shall have attained the ability to decide on every subject submitted to them according to its moral merits; the true test will be that of sense or nonsense, just or unjust, true or false; and the dogmas of original supernaturalism will then be no longer a matter of "*faith*."

23. "Religion" generally has abounded in proportion to the wants

and demands of society ; where there has been much ignorance and mental debility, there has been much "*faith*"—much reverence for, and servility to, the priest ; on the other hand, where there has been a strong and enlightened reason, the motives for propriety of conduct have been sufficiently apparent, without being goaded by priest-taught hopes, fears, and habits of superstition—of "religious" delusion. The "*mysteries of godliness*" are now well understood by the intelligent ; the ignorant alone continue to "*believe and tremble.*"

24. The present is an age of facts—of prose, not of poetry ; and though many there be who still prefer the fanciful and dazzling combinations which peculiarly belong to periods of ignorance and superstition, yet that which is, is inevitable ; and that which is inevitable must be necessary. Far lookings into the past and into the future have enlightened men's sight ; so many changes of fleeting time—glimpses, too, of the eternity these rest on, which knows no change—will lead to broad and certain views.

25. The infinite mode of being—the universe—must be even because it is, as there can be no idea of time *a priori* : the infinite is the necessary,—

"————— Strong necessity,
Which keeps the world in its still changing state."

26. Fifty years hence, will not the understanding of men be capable of perceiving the simple ground on which must be rejected the monstrous dogma of "*deity*"—of an imaginary "originating" or "creating" "*spirit*"—the fearful abstraction of "*Almighty*" power ; and will they not perceive that as infinity and eternity are necessary attributes, the material universe to which alone these attributes can apply, and which refuses itself to moral comprehension or supremacy, must exist of necessity also ?

27. The obvious incomprehensibility of the universe deciding the fact of its moral non-comprehension—of course, its pretended infinity-comprehending, moral-impossibility-performing "God" ("God Almighty," "Father which art in heaven," "dying Redeemer," the whole chatter-prayer list)—falls to shatters and nothing.

28. Half a century hence, as what sort of fools will those individuals be viewed who shall formally attend "divine service," to hear a black-gowned drone solemnly "hold forth" on the doctrines of "vicarious sacrifice," "imputed sanctification," and "justification by faith ?"

29. Will not men be then sensible that the only species of moral fear, to which humanity is socially subject, is the apprehension of those natural and civil inconveniences and calamities that necessarily result from imprudence, folly, and vice ?

30. Who that has revolted from real tyranny, and renounced all awe of the actual tyrant, will be so morally stupid as still to crouch before imaginary "divine power"—awe-smitten, bow in "adoration" of an abstract notion of all that is supremely despotic ?

31. Time presses onward ; manners and customs change ; institutions become modified, some ripening in the course of ages, and others falling to decay ; but the great principles, of *true* and *good*, of politics and ethics, of public and private morality, are fixed and immutable—fixed as the mode of the universe.

32. The same chain embraces the physical and moral worlds, binds the past to the present, the present to the future, and the future to eternity ; man finds himself in the midst of a number of beings who resemble himself, and among whom he is counted as unity ; he is united to humanity ; his reason acquaints him that his life is only the link of a series, without beginning or end ; he is placed by two sides in contact with infinity, the series is eternity.

33. The continuity of human life is maintained by the rapid succession of generations from age to age, and which are perpetually transferring from hand to hand the concerns and duties of fleeting life.

34. The ample field of life should be filled with pleasure, with advantage, and with usefulness.

35. Every day of our existence consists of term and vacation ; and the perfection of practical wisdom is to interpose them one with another, so as to produce a perpetual change, a well-chosen relief, and a freshness and elastic tone, which may bid defiance to weariness.

36. We would all, both individuals and societies, be free from the evils which mankind is heir to ; but we must not be hurried away with this desire, but controul it with the stronger effort of a will made wise by a knowledge of the necessity of the conditions of natural existence. Death is only a necessity of nature, and consequently not an evil.

37. Nature is not the sport of whimsical “demons,” nor should humanity be the subject of unearthly terrors. It is enough for men to die without being disturbed by fancies of “gods” and “devils ;” and it requires no prodigious stretch of the understanding to include, under the phrase of “makers and lovers of a lie,” all who, on pretence of “religion,” would prolong men’s “faith” in what the current of human experience proves to be far removed from the truth.

38. He who has discovered that, as the joys of life are unsubstantial, so are its woes supportable ; who is contented with the absence of corporeal and mental pain, and the presence of some enjoyment ; who loves his own species well enough to be placable to folly, and not to be inordinately censorious even of vice ; who is reconciled to death, life’s necessary succession, and is superior on principles of knowledge, to posthumous apprehensions—he bids fairly to sketch the character of a wise man.

39. We only begin to know how to live when we know how to measure ourselves with objects, how to proportion our attachment and our application to their importance. It is thus we avoid too great an indifference for some things, and too great an ardour for others.

40. The wise man's kingdom is his own breast ; or, if he ever looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few, who are free from prejudices, and capable of imparting to him solid and substantial truths.

41. The wisest nation is that which makes the most of its country. Industrious nations have always been the most moral ; the immorality of idle nations has always been great.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER XI. PART II.

ABSENCE AND RETURN.

In revisiting those from whom we have been long separated, it is cheering to find that no change of feelings has taken place ; that the same eager aspirations after what is good and great still animate them ; that they still cherish an undying hatred of oppression, an unquenchable sympathy with virtue ; that their perceptions of whatever is just and true are now, as always, ardent, and their forthreachings after excellence as sincere.

ADVANCED VIEWS.

1. In the history of human knowledge an individual sometimes appears, who, concentrating the labours of past years, and placing himself in advance of the philosophy of his age, grasps, with a natural magnificence of thought and intellect, views which affect the "religious" opinions of his contemporaries.

2. Now and then a liberal-minded person will arise, above the vulgar prejudices, who will follow the impressions of nature engraven upon his heart, and revolt against those laws which are repugnant to reason and philanthropy.

ALGEBRA.

Mr. Friend pointed out to the learned of Cambridge, that their "*negative quantities*" in algebra were not only nonsensical and useless, but actually prejudicial to science. Of course the learned professors would not consent to be untaught, to unlearn, to give up their acquired ignorance, and to learn sense ; but at the Mechanics' Institute algebra is now taught without "negative quantities."

AMUSEMENT AND THOUGHT.

1. The habit of dissipating every serious thought by a succession of agreeable sensations is as fatal to happiness as to virtue ; for when amusement is uniformly substituted for objects of moral and mental interest, we lose all that elevates our enjoyments above the scale of childish pleasure.

2. Uninstructive amusement may be afforded for a moment by a passing jest or ludicrous anecdote, by which no knowledge is conveyed to the mind of the hearer or the reader ; but the man who

would amuse others for an hour, must tell his hearers something they do not know, or suggest to them some new reflection upon the knowledge they have previously acquired. The more the knowledge bears upon their pursuits, upon their occupations, or upon their interests, the more attractive it will be, and the more entitled to be called useful.

3. The earlier years of man should make provision for the latter ; perpetual levity must end in ignorance ; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short and miserable. Youth is of no long duration, and in mature age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and the phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but in the knowledge we have acquired and the means which may remain to us of doing good. The most dreadful of the evils of age is, to count our past years by our follies, and to be reminded of our former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced.

APOSTACY.

If the usual march of conviction be from believing more to believing less—then apostacy, from whatever to whatever creed, is always so far a merit, that it implies inquiry and the exercise of private judgment.

ARISTOCRACY.

The aristocracy occupy themselves exclusively about the mere ceremonials of behaviour ; thence a pleasing though imposing manner, which is compatible with a mind essentially and grossly vulgar.

ARMIES.

1. In the prodigious efforts of a veteran army, beneath the dazzling splendour of their array there is something revolting to the reflective mind. The ranks are filled with the desperate, the mercenary, the depraved ; an iron slavery, by the name of subordination, merges the wills of a hundred thousand men in the unqualified despotism of one ; the humanity, mercy, and remorse, which scarcely ever desert the individual bosom, are sounds without a meaning to that fearful, ravenous, insatiable monster of prey—a mercenary army. Long service in the ranks of a conqueror turns the veteran's heart into marble ; his valour springs from recklessness, from habit, from indifference to the preservation of a life, knit by no pledges to the life of another.

2. The longest list of evils—the happiness of the greater number destroyed to gratify the appetites of the small number of privileged, and those the most unworthy—may be ascribed to the preponderating oppression of physical force, concentrated in the hands of those who have the direction of standing armies at their disposal ; and in proportion as the force of regular armies has been neutralized and kept in check by either the actual or virtual operation of a superior strength in the hands of the community, has been the degree of

safety, honour, freedom, and all other good things which has fallen to the share of those in whom is the real fee-simple of the interests of society. And if the countries in which the ratio is greatest may be considered as occupying the highest place in the scale of human improvement, it seems to follow that the one in which the proportion should be none at all, or in which the mass of the community was disarmed, would present the lowest depths of comparative degradation.

ASSOCIATES.

1. The mind contracts or expands according to intellectual intercourse. Live with people who have but few ideas and frivolous habits, and some assimilation of character is inevitable; associate only with your own fraternity, and bigotry of one kind or another will be the consequence. Nothing more contributes to maintain our common sense than living in the universal way with multitudes of men.

2. Nothing tends more to open the understanding and enlarge the mind of a young man just entering on life, than an opportunity of observing the manners and tracing the prevailing current of thought in classes of society different from his own: it will be found the most efficacious antidote to that narrow bigotry and those exclusive modes of thinking which seldom fail eventually to impair the understanding, by circumscribing its exercise and expansion.

ATTEMPTS.

“ If I do this—what further can I do?
 ‘ Why more than ever. Every task thou dost
 Brings strength and capability to act;
 He who doth climb the difficult mountain’s top
 Will, the next day, outstrip an idler man.
 Dip thy young brain in wise men’s deep discourse—
 In books—which, though they daunt thy will awhile,
 Will knit thee, in the end, with wisdom.”

There is room enough in human life to crowd almost every art and science into it. If we pass “no day without a line.” visit no place without the company of a book, we may with ease fill libraries or empty them of their contents. Those who complain of the shortness of life, let it slide by them without wishing to seize and make the most of its golden minutes. The more we do, the more we can do; the more we know, the more we shall know; the more busy we are, the more leisure we shall have. If any one possesses any advantage in a considerable degree, he may make himself master of nearly as many more as he pleases, by employing his spare time and cultivating the waste faculties of his mind. While one person is determining on the choice of a profession or study, another shall have made a fortune or gained a merited reputation. While one person is dreaming over the meaning of a word, another will have learned several languages. It is not incapacity, but indolence and indecision that prevent us.

ATTENDANCE AT HOUSES OF WORSHIP.

Of all men, the wicked are the most scrupulously punctual in their attendance at places of worship; for, though good men may absent themselves from such public haunts, bad men never can; for the outward show of devotion is an indispensable monument of the game they have to play in the world.

AUSTERITY.

That remorseless inflexibility of character which led martyrs to the stake for their religion—that is to say, for nothing at all; and which enables a man to maintain the consistent obstinacy of a bad heart, is the result of the utmost conceivable degree of weakness of understanding.

AVARICE.

“Many things,” says Holberg, “are only accountable by supposing man an idiot. The passion of avarice grows uniformly more griping and sordid with age; over-thriftiness turns to avarice, avarice to fraud, and fraud to robbery; and thus the oldest rogue becomes the greatest.”

BACON.

In the thirteenth century, an appeal from the authority of the schools, even to nature itself, could not be made with impunity. Bacon, accordingly, incurred the displeasure both of the university and the church; and this forms one of his claims to the respect of posterity, as it is but fair to consider persecution inflicted by the tyrannical and bigoted as equivalent to praise bestowed by the liberal and enlightened.

BENEFITS.

To love those whom we have benefited is almost as natural a process of the human mind as to hate those whom we have injured.

BIGOTRY.

1. How limited is the range of thought when the mind is labouring under the sentiment of “religious” awe! Wherever the solemnity of fear has diffused itself, men are alarmed at hearing any doctrines at variance with their habitual impressions, and their wishes are usually pointed to an unanimity with their own familiar views; they startle at anything which tasks their understanding or suggests doubts of the infallibility of the creed they are trained to repeat.

2. As every bigoted individual believes himself infallible, places contradiction in the rank of offences, and can neither esteem nor admire anything in another but what resembles something in himself; so every bigoted nation, in like manner, never esteems in other nations any ideas that are not analogous to its own, and every contrary opinion or custom is a seed of contempt.

3. The man who differs from me in “religion” is a “deist” and an “infidel,” though, very probably, the appellation has no con-

nexion with truth ; but this is a matter of no consideration at all with the bigot.

“ BLESSED IMMORTALITY.”

In the symptomatic fever, named hectic, a morbid cause vivifies every pleasurable feeling which can possibly connect itself with a favourable prognosis. And if we grant that this delusive hope of an immediate state of convalescence arises indiscriminately in the breast of the consumptive patient, what reason is there that an expectation equally extravagant should not extend to a fancied state after death ; that scenes connected with the prospect of a “ blessed immortality ” should not rise before the patient with all the vivid colouring that a hectic affection is capable of imparting to the images of fancy ; or that spectral impressions of “ angel-visits,” incidental to a morbidly-excited state of hope, should not alike be cherished by the good man as by the slave of vice ? The truth is, that the “ guardian-spirits,” who honour the bed of dying patients with their visits, adopt a line of conduct never to be depended upon for consistency. As harbingers to “ heaven,” they show the same readiness in offering their services to sinners as to saints. This fact still continues to meet with confirmation from many modern superstitious narratives, the subjects of which are the visible tokens of “ salvation,” and “ beatific visions ” enjoyed by the most dissolute and abandoned of human beings at their hour of death.

BONDS OF PREJUDICE.

Whoever confines himself to conversing with one set of companions cannot avoid adopting their prejudices, especially if they flatter his wide. Who can separate himself from an error, when vanity, the companion of ignorance, has tied him to it, and rendered it dear to him ? It is the philosopher alone who contemplates the manners, customs, “ religions,” and the different passions that actuate mankind, who can become almost insensible both to the praise and satire of his cotemporaries ; can break all the chains of prejudice, and examine, with modesty and disinterestedness, the various opinions which divide the human species.

CHARITIES.

1. Nothing can be clearer than the natural direction of charity. Would we all but relieve, according to the measure of our means, those objects immediately within the range of our personal knowledge, how much of the worst evil of poverty might be relieved.

2. For one man to interfere with another’s charities is always delicate—nay, dangerous ; for how can the person who comes to me to solicit my aid to some poor family, whose necessities he wishes to relieve, know either my means or the claims that lie already upon me, and which I am doing my best to discharge ? Yet am I to apologize to him for not drawing my purse-strings immediately at his solicitation ?

Am I to explain how it happens that I cannot comply? He is not entitled to hold such a colloquy with me. Yet, if I simply say, "Sir, I must refuse your petition," he probably condemns me as a heartless miser, and among his friends does not abstain from hints on my selfish character.

"CLERGY."

Dean Swift wrote—"I never saw, heard, nor read, that the clergy were beloved in any nation where Christianity was the religion of the country."

CONCEIT.

A well-meaning man, when he gets a wrong idea in his head, is the most consummate of nuisances. His consciousness of intending all for the best makes him stubborn in the wrong. He cannot conceive his honesty can be absurd, any more than his perseverance through thick and thin can be often but another shape of obstinacy, that no experience can soften, or of sullen self-will that nothing in the shape of reason can guide.

CONDENSED LITERATURE.

1. There is no literary activity more useful than that which renders useless the voluminous writers of former ages, by selecting their information, condensing their arguments, and picking out their characteristic passages.

2. An era is fast approaching when no writer will be read by the great majority, save and except those who can effect that for bales of manuscript that the hydrostatic press performs for bales of cotton, by condensing that matter into a period that before occupied a page.

3. All the domains of science and literature have yet to be mapped out, as it were, before the popular mind can range over them with ease and freedom. We are arrived at that period of civilization when it is impossible to remain contented with heaping more bricks and straw upon the enormous heap of old materials. The piles of antiquity must be re-sorted, the rubbish thrown out, the profitable stock well *compacted*. In an improved state of society, men will apply themselves, not to multiply books, but to gather together knowledge. The lumber of letters will be left to perish, or be preserved only in one or two public libraries for the gratification of a few harmless antiquaries. The main part of mankind will be content to drink of the essence which will be carefully prepared for them; and whilst they abundantly slake their thirst for knowledge, they will go about their active duties with vivid hopes and vigorous intellects, and with that conscious equality which distinguishes the free citizens when knowledge is the common possession of every condition of mankind

COPERNICAN SYSTEM.

1. Copernicus stands at the head of those men who, in modern ages, bursting the fetters of prejudice and authority, established truth

on the basis of experience and observation. The new doctrine was advanced by him with great caution, as if from a presentiment of the opposition and injustice which it would experience. At first, however, his system attracted little notice, and was rejected by the greater part even of astronomers. It lay smouldering in secret, with other new discoveries, for more than fifty years, till, by the exertions of Galileo, it was kindled into so bright a flame that it alarmed the Church, as it threatened the existence of every opinion not founded in eternal nature. The sensations which a view through the telescope must have communicated to the philosopher who first beheld it, may be conceived more easily than expressed. To the immediate impression made upon the senses, to the admiration excited, was added the proof which, on reflection, was afforded of the close resemblance between the earth and the "celestial" world, the "divine nature" of which had been so long and so erroneously contrasted with the ponderous and gross substance of our globe. The earth and the other planets were now found to be bodies of the same kind, and consistent views began to be entertained of the material universe. The great barrier to philosophic improvement which had been reared by the separation between "terrestrial" and "celestial" substances, and between the laws which regulate motion on the earth and in the "heavens," was now entirely removed; the earth and the infinite world were reduced to the same condition, and the same rules of interpretation became applicable to universal phenomena. Principles derived from experiments on the planetary system became guides for the analysis of the universe, and men were now in a situation to undertake investigations and arrive at conclusions which the most hardy adventurers in science could not before have dared to imagine. Philosophers had ascended to the knowledge of the relations which pervade universal nature—time and space; and the light thus struck out from physical objects darted its rays into regions of moral inquiry. When men saw opinions entirely disproved which were sanctioned by the authority of the "divines," they began to have true conceptions of the necessary conditions of the eternal and infinite existence, and the magic circle by which the "priest" had contrived to circumscribe the liberty of the philosopher disappeared; men were made acquainted with the natural order which connects together the most distant regions of space, as well as the most remote periods of duration.

2. For the sake of undeceiving those who are disposed to believe that "*power*" can subdue truth, the sentence pronounced by a council of seven high-priests of the Christian church—Cardinal theologians—ought never to be forgotten—viz., "That to assert that the earth is not immovable in the centre of the world, is false and absurd, and, considered *theologically*, erroneous, heretical, and contrary to the testimony of '*Scripture*.'" Was this the act of hypocrites, who considered "religion" as a state-engine?—or the act of bigots long trained in the art of "*believing*" without evidence, or even in opposition to it?

CREATIONISTS AND ETERNALISTS.

The creationists fancy themselves frail in their nature, and fallen from the "original" perfection of their race; they hold all their weaknesses for sins, and look to their "religion" as a means of reconciliation with "God." The eternalists recognize nothing but the underived universe, their necessary nature; they desire to become nothing else than what they are, and only wish to ennoble the inclinations that actually belong to them, and embellish them by cultivation. The first place their whole reliance on a "Mediator," from whom they expect "supernatural" assistance; the others rely on their own natural faculties as fully competent to the attainment of good, and only require information from the more instructed among themselves. Those fancy in their "sacrament" deep "mysteries," and approach them with a dread of which they know nothing. The creationists figure to themselves a heaven and a hell, resurrection, in wonderfully varied colours; the naturists do not conceive for a moment of the continuation of their personality; far less can they reconcile the notion of a place of torment with moral goodness.

CRIME OF THE HEART.

Errors or caprices of the temper can be pardoned or forgotten; but a cold, deliberate crime of the heart is not to be washed away.

CRUELTY.

1. Liberty and justice are in all men's mouths, while not one in a thousand can be brought to lend a willing ear when it is proposed to strike at the root of that cruelty of disposition which makes of men tyrants and oppressors.

2. If we were to detail the worst propensities of example-corrupted man, disgusting as they might be, yet the one most eminently offensive would be cruelty—a compound of tyranny, ingratitude, and pride; tyranny, because there is the power; ingratitude, for the most harmless and serviceable are usually the objects; pride, to manifest a contempt of the weakness of humanity. Killing everything and cruelty are the common vices of the ignorant; and unresisting innocence becomes a ready victim to prejudice or power.

CUNNING.

Cunning is the wisdom of uncultivated man; wisdom itself, being a power of anticipating remote combinations, can only be a consequence of knowledge. Hence the involuntary disgust so frequently produced by the sharpness exhibited by illiterate people of strong natural capacities: it almost always assumes the selfish form of cunning.

DEATH.

1. People form the most fearful conception of "the last struggle," the "separation of the soul from the body," and the like; but this is all void of foundation: no man certainly ever felt "what death is,"

or it is nothing; and as insensibly as we enter into life, equally insensible is its cessation. The beginning and the end are here united. We are taught by experience, that all those who ever passed through the first stage of death (death itself), and were again brought to life, unanimously asserted that they felt nothing of dying, but sank at once into a state of insensibility.

2. Let us not be led into a mistake by the convulsive throbs, the rattling in the throat, and the apparent pangs of death, which are exhibited by many persons when in a dying state. These symptoms are painful only to the spectators, and not to the dying, who are not sensible of them. The case here is, as if one, from the dreadful contortions of a person in an epileptic fit, should form a conclusion respecting his internal feelings: from what affects us so much, he suffers nothing.

3. The result of the observation of many a closing scene in various climes, leads to the conclusion that death is envisaged by those with the least horror whose lives have been least influenced by superstition or fanaticism, as well as by those who have cultivated literature and science with the most ardour.

DEVIL.

1. Shocked at the idea of making what they are pleased to call "God" the author of evil, the pietists are forced to vindicate his goodness at the expence of his power, and raising up another or a rival power, which they term the "devil," they make him the cause of all moral evil, while the said God is only the author of good.

2. Christians so firmly believe themselves to be tempted by the fascinations of the "devil," that although we may talk to them till we have tired our hearers and ourselves, they continue to retain this belief as an article of faith.

DIALOGUE.

Dialogue is naturally monotonous, and consequently tiresome; the questions and answers of the interlocuters become at last fatiguing, and one is often vexed to find that an argument which ought to be followed up and sustained, is interrupted by some interrogation very little to the purpose, and which only serves to mortify the reader.

DISCUSSIONS.

Discussion, when well regulated and kept within proper bounds, and the object of which is to place subjects in their proper light, is the most useful mode in the world for the investigation of truth.

DISHONOURABLE SUBMISSIONS.

It is no unusual thing for persons whose imaginations are excited to rush into causeless quarrels, and then to make discreditable retreats from them.

DOUBT.

1. In the minds of some people a strong prejudice appears to exist against that state of the understanding which is termed *doubt*. A

little reflection, however, will convince any one that, on certain subjects, doubt is as appropriate a state of mind as belief or disbelief in others. There are doctrines, propositions, facts, supported and opposed by every degree of evidence, and many among them by that degree of it, of which the proper effect is to leave the mind in an equipoise between two conclusions. In these cases, either to believe or disbelieve would imply that the understanding was improperly affected, and doubt is the appropriate result which there can be no reason to shrink from or lament.

2. Doubt is the key of knowledge ; those who do not doubt will never examine ; and those who do not examine will never *know*, but remain in perpetual ignorance.

3. The vulgar are commonly very positive, thinking themselves possessed of absolute certainty in almost everything they think they know : this happens from their weighing their evidences singly. But the contemplative use themselves to compare the judgments as well of their senses as of their understandings, which they frequently find contradictory ; therefore they abound in doubts that never enter into the head of a common man, which has occasioned doubt to be reckoned the avenue to philosophy. The use of doubt is to prevent hasty decisions, and lead to something more sure and certain than we could have attained without it.

DRAMA.

In the words of Blair—" Dramatic poetry has been deemed among all civilized nations a rational and useful entertainment. Tragedy is, or ought to be, a mirror in which we behold ourselves and the evils to which we are exposed ; a faithful copy of the human passions with all their direful effects, when they are suffered to become extravagant ; and comedy, as a satirical exhibition of the improprieties and follies of mankind, does a real service to the world by polishing manners, promoting attention to the proper decorum of social behaviour, and, above all, by rendering vice ridiculous.

EDUCATION.

The proper object of education is truth, not the particular opinions of any men or set of men. Its aim should be not to load the memory, but to exercise the reason. It is not alone a code of particular practices, but an examination of general principles which is wanted to form the early character of youth—to habituate it to weigh the consequences of actions—to understand and to feel the hidden sources of the just and the unjust, the really efficient motives that make one line of conduct preferable to another. Upon the whole, it may be safer to leave the young mind an absolute blank, than to fatigue it with catechismal maxims, and to make it an acquiescent receptacle for moral dogmas which it is forbidden to question.

ECCENTRICITY.

The world is indebted to any man who will take the trouble to

deviate from the beaten track in any way. That eccentricity is a good thing and beneficial to the public is evident from this ;—that an eccentric character is always odious to, and spoken ill of by the priests, who are unanimous in the opinion that the ignorant notions and the abuses by which they exalt themselves can only subsist so long as men blindly adhere, without change or investigation, to the customary prejudices and practices. There would be no “religion” if men were so “eccentric” as to examine and reflect for themselves.

ELECTION.

1. John Wesley says, “One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected ; nineteen in twenty are reprobated ! The elect shall be saved, do *what they will* ; the reprobate shall be damned, do *what they may*.”

2. “Reverend” sophists, or “reverend” ignoramuses preach the “damnation” of the main number of their fellow-men. The idea of a “*bloody atonement*” to “satisfy” the rigidity of the *letter* of their Bible-god’s justice with regard to an elected few, however susceptible of being mystified for the delusion of the thoughtless and weak-minded, is surely too absurd to be listened to by the rational and disinterested. Unengendered, “supreme, and omniscient being” begot a mediating son, and ordained that this engendered man-god should be sacrificed as an “*atonement*” for the redemption of the forfeited souls of a *few* of his created men. Huzza !

ENLIGHTENMENT.

1. If we understand by enlightenment, sound instruction in all that is important to man ; clear conceptions and the removal of all erroneous and confused notions, enabling him correctly to comprehend the economy of his existence, that he may view it in its true light, and justly estimate every object that lies within his sphere ; then, there is no doubt, that reason must be considered as the source of true enlightenment, so long as it remains faithful to the eternal and unchangeable order of all truth, which lies in human nature and its relations.

2. When we call a person enlightened, we mean to say that he has freed himself from the influence of prejudice, of inherited, untried, opinions and habits, and of obscure feelings ; and that he makes it his maxim to admit nothing but what is accurate and perspicuous, to reduce everything to clear and distinct conceptions, and to determine solely by these his judgment and actions.

3. Enlightenment does not extend to everything that can be known by man. We ascribe it to him who has an unprejudiced and distinct knowledge of all that it is essential for him to know in order to attain his entire satisfaction.

EROTIC FANATICISM.

1. When persons of deep feelings and glowing imaginations will and act, hate and love, it is always done with excessive fervour ; thus

it is as well in religious as in social life. The foundation of this lies in the preponderance of their inferior powers of mind, in comparison with the higher; that is, in comparative strength of feeling and imagination over reason and understanding. Their religion becomes, by this means, entirely symbolical and sensible. Like as in children religious representations are usually more symbolical and sensible than in grown up persons whose judgment is more mature. Even those persons, therefore, who think themselves nearest to the spiritual kingdom, and who imagine that they can so entirely spiritualize themselves as to enter into union with their famed "God," are commonly most ruled and deceived by their sensible nature—namely, feeling and imagination. Their prayers have more of the senses in them; their hopes of eternity, and their love to God and Jesus, have more of the senses. Far from exhibiting that pure spiritual veneration and worship, which are distinct and exempt from everything of sense, they act towards the fancied sublime object of their love with all the manifestations of an earthly tenderness; they speak of him, whom they fancy they are addressing, with such sweet and endearing epithets as remind us more of what is common upon earth than of anything that could be fancied "celestial" or immaterial. Nay, instances are not uncommon, that such a supposed religious love has degenerated into real fanaticism or madness, uniting the wild emotions of a suppressed carnal instinct with the phrenzy of an imagined holy inspiration.

2. There is little or no hope of overcoming these aberrations, because instruction is in vain addressed to intellects which have been long overruled by the imagination and the feelings.

"ETERNAL TORMENTS."

1. Watson was so foolish as to think he described this fancied horror thus:—"Oh, eternity! If all the body of the earth and sea were turned to sand, and all the air up to the starry heaven were nothing but sand, and a little bird should come once in a hundred thousand years, and fetch away in its bill but the tenth part of a grain of all that immense world of sand, what an inconceivable number of years would be spent before that vast world of sand would be fetched away! Yet, if at the end of all that immense period of time, the sinner might come out of hell, there would be some hope; but this word *ever—endless—eternal*—breaks the heart!"

2. Young, too, has given us the very words in which he supposes the "soul in hell" would put up its petition:—

"Grant me, great God, at least,
This one, this simple, almost *no* request—
When I have wept a thousand lives away,
When torment has grown weary of its prey,
When I have raved ten thousand years in fire—
Ten thousand thousands—*let me then expire.*"

3. In the seventh book of "Paradise Lost," myriads of miserable

men and women are represented as plunged into perpetual and unmitigated "hell-flames,"

"—————that sparkling glazed
Up to the iron roof, whose echoing vault
Resounded ever with dolorous groans
Of the sad crew beneath."

"Vain cry! the unmitigated furies urge
Their ruthless task, and to the cauldron's edge,
With ceaseless toil, huge blocks of sulphur roll,
Piled mountains high, to feed the greedy flames."

"All these, the accursed brood of sin, were once
The guilty pleasures, the false joys, that lured
Their sensual votaries to the infernal pit:
These their fell mother, watchful o'er her work,
With eye that sleep ne'er closed, and snaky scourge
Still waving o'er their heads, for ever plies,
To keep the fiery deluge at its heighth,
And stops her ears against the clamorous din
Of these tormented, *who for mercy call*
Age after age, inviolored and still denied."

"Our Saviour" at the sight of these agonizing wretches, is described as drawing from his soul

"————— a sigh of natural pity,"

but this, it seems was a transient sensation, for soon,

"————— his human sympathy gave place
To judgment better weighed and riper thoughts
Congenial with the godhead."

4. From conception such as this, the mind shrinks back with horror, and incredulity alone can soothe the pain it suffers.

5. If it were fact, it would be horrid to dwell upon the idea of this "divine truth"—"hell torments;" in reflecting that the far greater part of the human race should liquefy in "infernal hell fire" through everlasting ages.

6. However, as an old lady remarked to her son Jack, after hearing a reverend black-coat preach a swash-pulpit sermon, describing the terrors of God, devil, and hell torments, "*it is to be hoped it's not true.*"

7. In Blackwood's "*Noctes Ambrosianæ*," the shepherd is thus made to satirize slyly the divine doctrine of eternally agonizing:—"I never fan' any pain like that o' the tick dollaroose. Ane's no accustomed to a pain in the face. You've no idea how sensitiv's the face. Cheeks are a' fu' o' nerves, and the tick attacks the hail bunch o' them, screwin' them up to sic a pitch o' tension, that you canna help screechin' out like a thousand ools, and clappin' the pawms o' yer hands to yer distrackit chaps, and rowin' yoursel' on the floor, on your groof, wi' your hair on end, and your een on fire, and a general muscular convulsion in a' your sinnies, sae piercin', and searchin', and scrutinizin', and diggin', and howkin', and tearin', is the pangfu' pain that keeps eetin' awa' and manglin' the nerves o' your human face divine, draps o' sweat pourin' down to the verra

floor. Only think o' the tick dollaroose in a man's face continuin' to a' eternity! or even for only a few millions o' millions o' ages!"

8. All punishment which is to revenge, rather than correct, must be morally wrong. What moral or warning purpose can eternal tortures answer? Oh! forsooth, monstrous old fabulous "God" has an orthodox pleasure therein.

FEUDAL AGE.

1. When we recollect the havoc, massacres, and spoliations produced by the incessant turbulence and rapacity of feudal ruffians—and the history of Europe has been a record of little else—it is impossible to repress a melancholy smile at the perverted ingenuity which would represent the state of the wretched victims of such disorder as superior to that of the modern artizan.

2. The wretched attempts of Cobbett, in his "History of Catholicism," and of Southey, in his "Sir Thomas Moore," to exalt ages of darkness, ignorance, and barbarity, into equality with, or even preference to, the manifest improvement of modern times, simply because a large portion of the mass of humanity lay mentally prostrate before power and priestcraft, would be truly disgusting, if the astonishing complacency with which their nonsense is submitted to the world did not merge anger at their sophistry into amazement at their self-delusion. The *beau ideal* of Dr. Southey implies a nation governed by a few croziered priests and well beneficed subordinates of a single creed. The doctor undervalues every species of knowledge which is not obtained through the Church catechism.

FREE PRESS.

It is a remarkable illustration of the value of a free press, that even in those respects in which it would seem, to the short-sighted, most formidable to the interests of mankind, it has proved the most beneficial. Although prejudice would dread, and the priest affect to dread, the power of the press over public tranquillity and private character, as a peril to overbalance all its advantages on the side of liberty and justice, experience proves that the nations and periods which have enjoyed the greatest latitude to the expression of opinion, have presented the smallest amount of insurrections and revolutions.

FREE-THINKING.

A great deal of invective has been levelled against free-thinking; but thinking can never be too free, provided it is just.

FRIENDSHIP.

1. It is painful to find the character we have loved fallen from excellence to guilt; but how far beyond the bitterness of such pain is the discovery that we have loved one who never deserved our affection!

2. Perhaps there is no pang so acute as that which seizes us when we suspect that we have been totally deceived in a person's worth as

in his affection ; in proportion as we have exalted the object, our imagination aids reason in degrading him ; and having erred first in believing the subject perfect, we err again in imagining him completely vile.

3. A rational, free-minded man, tied to nothing but truth, is so rare, that I almost worship such a friend.

GIBBON.

"He shaped his weapon with an edge severe
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer ;
The lord of irony—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear :
They doomed him to the zealot's ready hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well."

1. A candid mind impressed with the love of truth, and anxiously seeking its attainment, cannot but be struck with Mr. Gibbon's plausible professions of respect for Christianity. "Why," would such a one ask, "did he not avow his convictions honestly and openly ? Why this continued mixture of sarcastic scorn and hypocritical reverence ?" The reason is obvious. Every "unbeliever" dares not encounter the inconvenience, which a direct opposition to vulgar opinion might occasion him.

2. The distinguishing excellencies of Gibbon are—first, his almost unrivalled erudition ; and second, his incomparable power of collecting and arranging events. He knew better than any other historian how to make a complicated series clear and intelligible ; when to narrow, when to expand the stream of his narration—what to dwell on, what to discard.

GOSPEL-RECEIVING PROSPERITY.

When, in spite of abuses, some degree of prosperity and happiness has been obtained by a nation, a fallacy is practised by the upholders of existing falsehood and corruption, to eulogize the system that has been submitted to, and to give to it the credit of having given birth to the good effects, although those prosperous results may have encountered nothing but obstacles and prevention in such a system. In this case the fallacy consists in representing, defending, and supporting, in the character of an indispensable cause of the acknowledged prosperity, the sinister and corruptive influence in question. "Whence," asked an inquirer of a high-priest of that nation which professes to outshine in virtue and knowledge all surrounding nations—"whence is it that we are to look for the true cause of this glorious pre-eminence ?" "Look for it ?" answered the priest, "Whence shouldst thou look for it, blind sceptic, but in the copious stream of divine blessings poured down upon us through reception of faith in the blood of Christ ?"

HISTORY.

1. The histories of monarchies, of tyrannies, of chivalry and clanship, of Mahometanism and the Christian Church, of the revolutions of empires, are little else than a tissue of crimes, exhibiting

nations as if they were so many herds of ferocious animals, whose genuine occupation was to tear each other to pieces, and to deform the earth with mangled carcasses and seas of blood.

2. It is a cruel mortification, in searching for what is instructive in the history of past times, to find that the exploits of conquerors who have desolated the earth, and the freaks of tyrants who have plunged nations in misery, are recorded with minute and often disgusting accuracy ; while the discovery of useful arts, and the progress of the most beneficial branches of commerce, are passed over in silence, and suffered to sink into oblivion.

3. It is a whimsical instance of the blindness of men to things immediately adjacent, that they prefer groping into antiquity for questionable proofs of our forefathers' manner of thinking and acting, to deriving their instruction from existing nations in a state of civilization parallel to that of our ancestors, at the periods when they are thought so worthy to be our models.

4. There is not one abuse, one intolerance, one remnant of ancient barbarity and ignorance, existing at the present day, which is not advocated, and actually confirmed, by some vague deduction from the bigotry of an illiterate chronicler, or the obscurity of an uncertain legend. It is through the constant appeal to our ancestors that we transmit wretchedness and wrong to our posterity ; we have made no sanction to abuses so powerful as history, and no enemy to the present like the past.

HUMAN INNOCENCE.

One of the most obvious views which are presented to us by man in society is, the inoffensiveness and innocence that ordinarily characterize him. Society, for the most part, carries on its own organization. Each man pursues his proper occupation, and there are few individuals that feel the propensity to interrupt the pursuits of their neighbours by personal violence. When we observe the quiet manner in which the inhabitants of cities, and, in the country, the frequenter of the fields and the high-roads, pass along, each engrossed by his private contemplations, feeling no disposition to molest the strangers he encounters, but, on the contrary, prepared to afford them every courteous assistance, we cannot in equity do less than admire the innocence of our species. There are a few men in every community that are sons of riot and plunder, and, for the sake of these, the censorious throw a general slur and aspersion upon the whole species. When we look upon human society with kind and complacent survey, we are more than half tempted to imagine that men might subsist very well in clusters and congregated without much coercion ; and, indeed, criminal laws are made but with a view to prevent the ill-disposed few from interrupting the regular and inoffensive proceedings of the vast majority.

IMPROVED JUDGMENT.

The man often covets to read again a book which delighted his

early years ; he endeavours to procure it, he succeeds at last, and then wonders that it entertains him no longer. "My taste," says he, "is become more refined."

INSTABILITY.

Versatile feelings and an unstable nature are characteristics often leading to results as fatal as those consequent on the indulgence of violent and evil passions.

INTELLECTUAL FASTIDIOUSNESS.

There are those who are turned aside from the career they might have accomplished by a visionary and impracticable fastidiousness. They can find nothing that possesses all the requisites that should fix their choice—nothing so good that should authorize them to present it to public observation, and enable them to offer it to their contemporaries as something that we should "not willingly let die." They begin often, but nothing they produce appears to them such as that they should say of it, "Let this stand;" or they never begin, none of their thoughts being judged by them to be such as to merit the being preserved. They have a microscopic eye, and discern faults unworthy to be tolerated in that in which the critic himself might perceive nothing but beauty.

JURIES.

At an early period, many more than twelve might constitute a jury, and it was not necessary for each man to concur in the verdict delivered, it being only required that twelve of the number should agree in opinion. But when, in course of time, it came to pass that, for the sake of convenience, only *twelve* men were summoned, still the original rule, requiring that number to agree, was adhered to ; and thus the present customs have gradually been introduced—customs whose existence is not only derogatory to reason in its improved and improving state, but which must inevitably give rise to deliberate and daily perjury.*

KIND OFFICES.

Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our foibles springs ;
Since life's best gifts consist in peace and ease
And few can save or serve, yet all may please ;
Oh ! let the ungentle spirit learn from hence,
A small unkindness is a great offence.

LAW OF CONTINUITY.

1. Nothing passes from one state to another without passing through all the intermediate states ; and this is regarded as a principle in philosophy which tests the consistency of theories, or of sup-

* Is it not more probable that, at the institution of juries, the principle recognised was that a man's guilt or innocence should be so evident that no man should be visited with punishment when any one man out of twelve, selected fairly to try an individual, was not convinced of the guilt or innocence of the offender? —
EDITOR.

posed law of nature, and the agreement of their parts with one another.

2. Leibnitz considered this principle as known *a priori*; because, if any *saltus* (jump) were to take place—that is, if any change were to happen without the intervention of time, or the natural process, the thing changed must be in two different conditions at the same individual instant, which is obviously impossible.

3. “Doctor” Samuel Clarke, in his dispute with S’Gravesande regarding this law, exhibited an insolence and irritability well in character when the temper and wit had been sharpened in the school of Christian theology.

LEIBNITZ.

The inclination of Leibnitz to those reasonings which proceed, or affect to proceed, continually from the cause to the effect, sometimes misled him in the study of nature. The “attributes of the deity” were the axioms of his philosophy, and he did not reflect that an argument which sets out with a most profound respect for the “supreme being” usually terminates in the most unwarrantable presumption. These reasonings from “first causes” are always ingenious, but nothing can prevent the substitution of such “causes” for those that are physical and efficient, from being one of the worst and most fatal errors.

LITERATURE.

1. As every advance in the path of science leads to the knowledge of some fact; so, in the fields of literature, at every new step we meet with agreeable evidence of high capacity and unexpected cultivation; and as our knowledge widens, so will our philanthropy; taught to esteem, we soon learn to love, our fellow men.

2. Literature, like commerce, best flourishes under the auspices of liberty; and the wider the expanse over which the inquirer can travel, the less liable is he to be betrayed by ignorance or misguided by prejudice.

LONGEVITY.

Life is long enough as it is. Why this vain longing for longevity? Why seek to rob life of its melancholy moral, namely, its transitoriness—and why deprive flowers, grass, dew, smoke, vapours, clouds, and bubbles of the poetry and passion now inherent in their names and nature, as natural emblems of the destiny of man?

LYING.

A man will pass better through the world with a thousand open errors upon his back, than in being detected in *one* sly falsehood—when one is detected, a thousand are suspected

MATHEMATICS.

1. By the mathematics, we are taught to weigh the earth, to scale the skies, and to calculate the motions of the heavenly bodies with such

precision, that a lucid point, to be seen but once in three quarters of a century, like Halley's comet, can be expected almost to an hour, nay, even met on its way from the depths of infinite space, and by optics keen singled out among myriads of telescopic stars, weeks before it could be discerned by ordinary sight.

2. In the present age of experiment and deduction, the custom of trying every subject by the standard of truth is become so general, that, of course, the mathematics are much more studied than formerly. The obvious tendency of this study is, to beget a habit of attention; to furnish a method of close and demonstrative reasoning, by which the mind may be delivered from prejudice, credulity, and superstition. By accustoming us to examine, and not to take things upon trust, and by giving us a clear and full knowledge of the condition of the universe—its attributes of infinity and eternity,—it frees us from the mean and narrow thoughts and apprehensions which ignorance and religion always generate. In former times, the wily politician, aided by priestcraft, succeeded in causing mathematicians to be considered as enemies of the "church." To the barbarous system of tyranny shrined in the name "religion," these studies are indeed most powerful adversaries; but can that pursuit, the aim of which is truth, and in the investigation of which a steady adherence to the *correct* is essential, be inimical to morality? Certainly not; on the contrary, the sciences must ever be the friends of morality, inasmuch as the study of them calms the passions, restrains the wildness of the imagination, and purges the mind from error and prejudice, and possesses an immediately practical importance towards the benefit of social life and liberty.

MANŒUVRERS.

It is rarely that a cold and selfish heart is accompanied by extensive views and an enlarged intellect. The manœuvrer, engrossed by the cunning of detail, has no thought for the wisdom of the complex, his scope is a succession of paltry temporary objects, each of which, in its turn, absorbs his whole attention, and is pursued without reference to its relative importance or to the influence which the means employed in its attainment may have on the future. He sacrifices character to win some dishonest trifle, and parts with a friend on the slightest expediency. Conscious too of the artifice of his combinations and the falsehood of his pretences, he cannot inspire a conviction that he does not feel; and the caution and circumspection which attend all his movements becoming infectious, beget an instinctive suspicion in the mind on which he wishes to operate.

MAXIMS.

1. General maxims are, in the conduct of life, what routine is in certain arts: situations in each constantly arise which require something beyond them.

2. Though a maxim may not apply to the peculiar circumstances in which a man finds himself placed, yet the general principles of

morals are not to be despised because their application is not immediately seen

3. The best maxims appear to be those which possess something of the homely sense of the proverb combined with the refinement of a philosophic truth.

MECHANICS.

1. There are many things in mathematics, particularly in what are called the branches of pure science, perfectly true in theory, but which fail altogether in the diagram.

2. Out of ten machines, or engines of art, which are exhibited, and against which no solid exception could be raised as to their sufficiency to produce the intended results—eight or nine at least would fail, when attempted to be brought into operation. There may be some obstacle in the process for which no principle could provide against *a priori*; and the successful operations of mechanics have had in them a portion of fortunate coincidence which was independent of all science and previous calculation.

3. Ninety-nine out of a hundred fine inventions, some little peg or screw is sure to render useless. Patentees heed not the little ground-springs which sap their edifice, and bring its glories about their ears.

4. It is not uncommon to find considerable practical talents combined with comparatively feeble powers of speculation. The habit of looking at present expedients, and forming hasty conclusions from superficial appearances, seems to incapacitate some men for raising their views to remote consequences, and tracing the operation of general principles. Their incapacity for mere intellectual processes, except those of the simplest sort, is, in truth, as remarkable as the occasional awkwardness of the philosopher in the active pursuits of life.

MEMORY AND JUDGMENT.

1. Without memory there can be no knowledge; and without judgment there can be no use of knowledge. If the memory does not retain, the mind is empty; if the judgment does not discriminate, the mind is confused. Judgment, without memory, has no objects, or facts, upon which to exercise its powers of discernment; memory, without judgment, preserves only a mass of uncombined and indiscriminate discordance.

2. He who reads without memory or discernment, will not be able to think, without which it is impertinent to read; nor to act, without which it is impertinent to think.

METAPHYSICAL SPECULATIONS.

The necessity of being intelligible, at least to all persons who join superior understanding to habits of reflection, and who are themselves in constant communication with the far wider circle of intelligent and judicious men, which slowly but surely forms general opinion, is the only effectual check on the proneness of metaphysical speculations to degenerate into gaudy dreams or a mere war of words.

MODELS

At first sight a well-constructed model presents a perfect representation of the disposition and proportion of the parts of a machine and of their mode of action. Misled by the alluring appearance, one is apt to suppose that the performance of a model in all cases commensurates with that of the machine which it is formed to represent. Ignorant of the inaccuracy of such an idea, too many mechanics and workmen waste their time and their abilities on contrivances, which, though they perform well on the small scale, must from their very nature fail when enlarged. Were the mode of computing effects better understood, we should see fewer crude and impracticable schemes thrust on the attention of the public.

MONITORIAL SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION.

The applying the superior knowledge of the abler and more advanced pupils to the instruction of the rest, is a method which has not its cheapness alone to recommend it. It developes, in its application to the minds of the young, new principles of action and new motives to exertion peculiarly adapted to operate upon them; it diffuses fresh life and system into the business of learning—banishing languor and listlessness, and substituting cheerful labour and love of application for weariness and dislike of instruction; and lastly, it is equally applicable to small schools as well as to large, and to many of the highest branches of education as to the lowest.

MORALISTS.

Good sense, caution, sobriety, and perpetual reference to convenience and practice, are the invaluable qualities of a moralist. It is necessary for man to be influenced, not by his own transient opinions and hasty passions, upon the tendency of every particular action, but by those fixed and unalterable rules which are the joint result of the informed judgments, the natural feelings, and the embodied experience of mankind.

MORAL RETRIBUTION ATTENDING SLAVERY.

Among the terrible reactions produced by the slave-trade, none is perhaps more merited or more evident than the dissoluteness of morals, and ferocity of disposition, which it creates among the people who are concerned in it. The cold-blooded calculator of profit and loss, the prime agent in the unhallowed trafic, feels its influence but in a remote and subordinate degree. It is when we cast a view on those who are placed immediately within the sphere of its action, that we perceive its deteriorating effects; their morals, their tempers, their airs, and their very countenances confessing its malignant influence. The softer sex, more especially, are transformed by it into cruel tyrants. When you mix in female society, you look in vain for the cheerful play of features which indicates a sweet disposition; in vain you listen for the harmonious tone of voice which is mellowed by the habit of associating with one's equals.

MYSTERY.

Mystery is a being of magical power in theology, a reconciler of absurdities, and the inseparable companion of priestcraft, fanaticism, and superstition. Her mantle is a pall, and she wears an amulet of dead mens' bones. She detests such words as reason and common sense, and calls them "carnal;" she deems it presumption to utter them along with her "peculiar doctrines," which are a tissue of paradoxes, contradictions, and impossibilities: she would exclude them from all pious vocabularies. Over the weak, the ignorant, and all whom the prejudices of custom and education have subjected to her control, she exercises a tyrannical domination. But men who know and dare to assert their rights, will neither be silenced nor spell-bound by her terrors. Bursting into the unhallowed circle which she draws around her, with the light of reason and truth, they dispel the mists in which she is shrouded, and expose her impositions to the scorn they merit.

NATURAL HISTORY.

1. All the natural objects that surround us are the subjects of natural history, and much of the improvements and enjoyments of civilized life are founded on our knowledge of animals, vegetables, minerals, and fluids. The endless variety of subjects which it embraces, and the peaceful nature of the pursuit, render this study not less interesting and agreeable than it is useful. Every animal or insect that presents itself, a few plants which may be gathered anywhere, a shell or a pebble that may be picked up on the sea-shore, suffice to afford the naturalist subjects of reflection, and an ample fund of intellectual enjoyment.

2. Natural history is becoming an important part of education; and the soft rising beams of its morning are silently and steadily creeping into the *nooks* and *corners*, dispelling the dark mists of bigotry, superstition, and error, and leaving light and loveliness in their room. When this knowledge shall have spread broadly over all parts of society, the rotten props of old established follies will have gradually wasted away, and the dens and strong-holds of mysticism will be cleared away with those masses of filth which ages have been piling together. No more then will children be abused by being forced to repeat—" *begotten upon the virgin by the holy ghost*,"—" *he descended into hell*,"—" *he rose again*," &c. &c.

NATURAL STUDIES.

1. Upon this sensible scene of existence, is it possible for an intelligent being to look without a desire for knowledge? There is no need for explaining how the desire to understand these objects should spring up in the mind; its own faculties are sufficient explanation. There would be more occasion to explain by what means that natural desire is so often suppressed and defeated of its natural growth and capacity.

2. In all times, we find that one strong passion of powerful and

aspiring minds has been the desire of natural knowledge. And, erring as men's opinions were under the religious despotism to which they were subjected; limited and imperfect as their ideas must have been under the circumstances of an education calculated to pervert and lead astray the mind from the world of nature, and to impose on its faculties the senseless task of acquiring the notions about a fictitious "divine" world; still the facts which were exposed to their senses were of such overpowering interest, and took such strong hold upon their speculation, that the desire of such knowledge has been most strong in the most illustrious men, and a proficiency in science has been the highest distinction of recorded names.

3. The pursuit of natural studies is not a painful labour imposed upon unwilling minds, like as with religion, piecing together with effort the notions forced upon them, in order to attempt the forming of some reasonable scheme out of its category of unnatural dogmas. In men of genius, we find a mind touched with delight by the realities disclosed, and led on by it to continued investigations. Men that have distinguished themselves, have given themselves up to such pursuits all life long, often without being influenced in any degree by the love of fame or any other reward than the simple and sublime satisfaction yielded by the study itself; for there are feelings of rapture which naught but science can afford, hours of secret and overflowing delight—the triumphs of gratified research. The whole character or temper of the mind is affected by such happiness, for though there is no mind that is incapable of kind and benevolent affections, yet there are many in which that disposition is perverted by bigotry. The study of nature tends greatly to subdue in the mind all those disturbing affections which destroy its native benevolence, and disposes it to renew its sensibility to the joy of mild and calm affections, rendering that sensibility ever more true and exquisite.

4. These studies lead us at once into the actual world of nature; they take us out of the conflict of ordinary life—out of all its uneasy desires and fears, its irritating recollections; out of all its agitating restless tumult into the midst of calm, beautiful sublime order. What is become of the little, anxious, disturbing jealousies of the mind, to him whose life is in his eyes, who stretches his sight into the abyss of space and pursues the infinite worlds in their eternal revolutions? What is become of the contractedness, the inhumanity, the superstition, the foolish illusions about fancied supernatural existences, or objects of worship of him whose knowledge is advanced deep into nature?

5. The taste of one may lead him to explore the expanse beyond the boundaries of mere sense; another's to examine and to analyze the conformation of a worm. However apparently trivial the minuteness of many of the objects of natural history, they cannot be insignificant. They are removed, indeed, from that common sort of importance by which things are apt to be measured in their ordinary reference to human life; but the moment they appear, as

to the naturalist they do appear, to open up to his eyes an insight into the world of life; the moment he can dare to say that he begins to trace the processes by which the natural species are pushed into being, and exert their transient energies in connecting the former with the succeeding links of the eternal lineage, from that moment their importance is immense and invaluable. The entomologist, with his microscope, dissecting a fly, and the astronomer watching through his telescope the motions of bodies a million times our earth's diameter, and ascertaining the universal order of planetary movements—both are employed in one and the same work; both have occupied in nature the faculties of their intelligence, and have endeavoured, to the best of their means, to explore and comprehend some small portion of the infinite universe.

6. To all the free students of nature there arrive the same rewards—viz., some portion of calm and satisfactory enjoyment. The moment they have begun to examine, they have begun to look into a world of interest; they have begun to look upon the structure of those objects which, in least and in greatest, have one character; they have begun to read in the book of that science which solves the knowledge of the entire conditions of their being—the science of the invariable and necessary modes of the infinite perpetuity. Whatever its own troubled disposition, the human spirit, impressible by such discoveries, is subdued under the presence of these thoughts; its feelings change to a pure and more generous temper; it is tranquillized and absolved from suffering, from ignorance, from doubt, from uncertainty, from superstition.

7. In watching a plant, in ascertaining its growth and habits, how slowly it expands from day to day; from month to month its progress is observed, till its complete run of action is disclosed. The naturalist fixes the interest of his mind upon that which proceeds so calmly under his eye, and his mind itself takes a tone of quiet and measured thought as it extends its recollections over that slow and quiet progress which he has seen, and its reflections over that progress as slow, and quiet, and continual, which pertains to and is the necessary condition of his own existence; he sees everywhere motion; in all, life; in all, the continual fulfilling of the functions of inevitable and infinitely existing nature in its uniform tenor.

8. Advert too to the avocations of him who watches the courses of animated life; looking at all the living kinds, regarding their happy play, their busy occupation; the young rejoicing in their sensations; the conduct of those who fulfil the imperative exigences of their being—supplying their wants and seeking their gratifications, as having contrivance and reason—discerning some resemblance to the intelligence of man! To see all this must needs speak to his sympathy, for it touches in him the very sense of his own human condition, and must always breathe something like a tenderness of affection into the deep and serene calm of contemplative thought.

9. In order to taste the pleasures derived from the study of nature,

it is not necessary that we should be skilled in the construction of every plant, or in the anatomy of every animal we behold. The only condition which nature requires, as the price of the gratification and mental improvement which her works can so abundantly yield, is simply a moderate attention to the ample volume she unfolds to man.

10. What is requisite for enjoying these studies is not always genius—is not always high intellectual capacity. It is interest and delight in nature; it is the unsophisticated mind that is alone indispensable. We know the names of those who have brought talent into the study of nature, but we know nothing of those nameless numbers who have brought nothing to it but their own ardent affections, and have gained nothing from it but their own peaceful happiness,

11. The great importance of a sound logic, in the investigation of every department of human knowledge, is nowhere more evident than in natural philosophy; for much depends upon a correct determination and sound development of the conception of nature; nowhere is it more important than here to know what are the requisites to a complete, accurate, and safe experience; what are the conditions of its possibility, according to what principles true inferences may be derived from these considerations, and by what means errors may be guarded against.

12. We owe it solely to philosophy that so many fabulous tales, superstitious notions, and deceptions of all kinds have been banished from natural history.

13. Philosophy has a most decided influence on the cultivation of all those sciences and arts by which the mind is formed, the heart ennobled, and life sustained and refined.

14. Knowledge in general expands the mind, exalts the faculties, and opens innumerable sources of mental enjoyment. The moral good which results from the acquisition of knowledge is chiefly this—that by multiplying the mental resources, it has a tendency to exalt the character, and, in some measure, to correct and subdue the taste for gross sensuality.

OATH-EXACTING.

1. Be his “religious creed” what it may, and however important his evidence to the case at issue, a witness must either be “sworn” on the “new Testament,” or his testimony be lost to the parties concerned and to the public. Another ridiculous or mischievous feature is, that while legal witnesses are screwed up by the process of oath-torture to a painfully precise observance of what they know or trow on the question at issue (which upon the nerves of most men has a withering and suppressing influence), the hired advocates who are opposed to them are not “sworn” at all, but are allowed licentiously to indulge in all sorts of prostitute finesse—falsehood, chicanery, and deception.

2. A “learned” but unsworn counsel shall know that he gains a

cause for a guilty individual by cunningly plugging up the fountain of information ; or shall " let slip the dogs " of falsehood, in order to hunt down truth, as soon as the kiss is impressed on the leather and the arena thrown open for the display of his gladiatorship. In such conduct he shall glory, while guilt triumphs and innocence is left to repine, because, forsooth, it brings up his own talent to the foreground : as if it were right that the end should be subservient to the means, and the chief object of law proceedings was not the administration of justice, but an exhibition of the abilities of the bar-advocates. Meanwhile, the presiding magistrate shall be fully aware of these things—this villany—and, deaf to the demands of justice, shall acquiesce in such conduct, and shall call it "*performing his duty.*"

3. Is anything meant by an oath more than a serious asseveration ? Many judges—such having their hocus-pocus (*hoc est corpus*) phrases, as well as priests, conjurors, and physicians—regard the ceremony as a mere effusion of cabalistic mystery, little better than a mountebank's trick-word ; or rather it becomes in law what those mystical dogmata are in religion, which are purposely indistinct, intentionally unintelligible to the multitude—stopping-points of awful alarm and obscurity : dark and *dreadful* curtains before which the superstitious "swearer," or admitted member surrenders his common sense on demand, and acknowledges by his act that he is mystified ; meanwhile, the hierophants and ministers both of law and "religion," hood themselves in official forms ; and crafty deceptions and baffling intricacies supersede the fair and simple reasoning of unbiassed minds, and shut out intellectual daylight precisely when it is most wanted. It is but too common with magistrates, as with priests, when they arrive with their votaries at the curtain of the *penetralium*, to suppress further inquiry by exhibiting a mystic ceremony ; an outward and visible sign which shall leave the invisible thing, or nothing, signified, shut up in its "ark," just where it was before the inquiry was made.

OCCUPATION.

Nothing is so painful to a well-constituted mind as the total absence of employment. Wherever man may be placed, let him have opportunity to labour, and his rest shall be sweet ; and his thoughts, accommodating themselves to his circumstances, shall, in like manner, gain vigour from his bodily exertion.

ORDER.

1. That mind only can enjoy serenity, which, added to virtuous intention, has the sober and tranquillizing habits of order ; and which, willing at all times to partake of pleasure, has the patience first to inquire what is the cost and what the consequence.

2. One of the first principles of order is to learn to be happy at home. It is in domestic retreat that every wise man finds his chief satisfaction.

“ PARADISE.”

A perpetual dream there has been of “paradise,” and some luxurious lubberland, where the brooks should run wine, and the trees bend with ready-baked viands; but it was a dream merely, an impossible dream.

PERMANENCY OF THE UNIVERSE.

From the nature of the case itself, we find ourselves utterly precluded from every other supposition, and adopt the conclusion, the undoubted conviction of the fact, that mankind have existed completely and eternally—complete in bodily form, complete in *faculties* of understanding, however deficient in knowledge, complete in language. Varieties of stock and varieties of language existed in periods indefinitely remote, indeed ever existed, because without them no single phenomenon respecting them could be accounted for at all. It is not harder to believe that races eternally had their subdivisions both in form of body and in tongue, than to believe the whole human race to have actually arisen out of the loins of a single pair, and in the term of a few years to have varied into all sorts of colours and languages. We believe the *natural* in preference to the “*miraculous*.” We cannot rest satisfied with the pretended explanations which have been given of the existing divarications from the marvellous six-thousand-years-ago unity. It is only by involving them with eternity that we can satisfactorily view man’s existence and faculties. In this we are subject to the same necessity that weighs upon us when we attempt to examine the “origin” and properties of other objects around us; their relations to one another, and the conditions of their being we can only observe in their effects; but why they are such as they are and no other than they are, are questions that can only be asked absurdly, when we consider them identified with the necessary eternity and infinity of the universe of natural things. To assume one single man and one “*primæval*” tongue, from whom all the different races of men and their languages were derived, is for the convenience of “religion”—for the convenience of the priesthood. The objects of science are the facts which do exist, historically developed in the evident world.

PERSECUTION.

Cruelty never succeeds so well as when, by exciting mirth, it destroys compassion.

PERSEVERANCE.

Those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten track of life, and acquiring a reputation superior to names hourly swept away by time amongst the refuse of fame, must add to their reason the spirit to persist in their purpose, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by persevering attacks.

PHILOSOPHY.

Ludovicus Vives, one of the most intelligent writers of the six-

teenth century says—"The truth is, that these scholastic philosophers are less acquainted with nature than husbandmen and mechanics. They have framed a nature of their own, which they honour with the name of the metaphysical world ; and if any man has a turn of mind averse to the study of real nature, but adapted to the pursuit of these visionary fictions, they say he is possessed of a sublime genius. The topics upon which they spend the whole force of their ingenuity, are of a kind at once the most puzzling and abstruse, and the most trifling and useless. Intention and remission, formality, quiddity, and other abstract notions, furnish innumerable questions to exercise their subtilty. Not content with considering properties and relations as they subsist and are perceived in natural objects, they separate the former from the latter, and by this artifice transform them into universal notions, which they consider as real entities, and make use of them as substantial principles. This literary barbarism prevails not only in metaphysics, but in physics." Instead of attempting to distinguish the real differences of things, and to deduce clear conclusions from certain principles, in order to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, they employ all the powers of ingenuity, and all the arts of sophistry, to obscure the principles of science and to mix truth with fallacy.

PHILOSOPHY OF STEWART, BROWN, ALISON, &c.

The shepherd, in the "*Noctes Ambrosianæ*," is made to express his opinion of the reputed philosophy of these gentlemen in the following terms :—"Yon explanations and theories o' Tammas Broon's, and Mr. Dugald Stewart's, and Mr. Alison's, and the lave, seem at the time the volume's lyin' open afore you, rational eneuch—sæ that you canna help believin' that each o' them has flung down a great bunch o' keys, wi' a clash, on the table, that'll enable you to open a' the locks o' a' the doors o' the temple o' natur. But, dog on't ! the verra first lock you try, the key 'll no fit ! or if it fits, you canna get it to turn roun', tho' you chirt wi' your two hauns till you're baith black and red in the face, and desperate angry."

POMP OF ROYALTY.

1. The sumptuous dress, the lengthened train of guards and attendants, the ceremonies of courts, are all instances of that mental puerility which is the characteristic of nascent civilization. In more manly governments these toys and rattles are laid aside, and the public business is conducted in plainness and sobriety.

2. The observance of pompous ceremonies, in nations, as in individuals or associated bodies, is a proof of stagnant intellect. None but the vain, the idle, and the useless, will afford the waste of time necessary for enacting such pageants ; the "great," therefore, or those in possession of customary or feudal prerogative, have always been the grand conservators of such abuses of time, taste, and good sense.

3. In despotic governments, all is absurd form ; and kings them-

selves, as Caraccioli, minister to Ferdinand, King of Naples, said, are but ceremonies.

POPULARITY.

1. Dr. Chalmers thus speaks of it :—" It is gaze, noise, stare, and animal heat, besides a tribe of other annoyances which it brings round the person of its victim. It has its head amongst the storms, and its feet on the treacherous quicksands, with nothing to support the agony of its tottering existence but the precarious hosannas of a drivelling generation."

2. How truly worthless are either the praises or execrations of the unthinking and superficial multitude.

PRAYER.

Prayer will probably in time be exploded or become obsolete ; and, as mind advances, more direct and efficient habits of contemplation and self-communion be substituted instead thereof. A capability of wholesome abstraction from local and personal interests may be acquired ; reason may obtain the means of concentrating its energies ; the feelings and the fancy may become amalgamated with the judgment—and thus from the willing of *impulse* approximate towards the wiser willing of *duty*. Prayer, proceeding from the tame subjugations of mere superstition and trained habit, might wear the stones out without effecting any important or practical results. The time may be approximating when none but the most abject and superstitious of religionists will think of enforcing " prayer " as a duty

PRECOCITY OF MIND.

A common result of application too early induced, is impotence of perseverance. Children seek in change of topics the relief which they are not allowed to find in change of employment ; if they may not shift the real scenery without, they shift the ideal scenery within ; the habit remains, and hence the prematurely accomplished are usually unstable in their pursuits. The ages of solicitous education are not proportionally fertile in excellence.

PREJUDICE.

A froward propensity to be angry with those who question the validity of our principles, or deny the justness of our conclusions in any matter relating to philosophy, policy, or " religion," is an infallible mark of prejudice.

PRESENTIMENT.

What we call a " presentiment " is nothing more than a fine tact by which one spirit, unconsciously divining the secret affections or anticipations of another, decides upon the probability of his future actions.

PRINCE EUGENE.

When Whiston applied a prophecy of the " revelations " to him, the prince politely thanked the expositor, but protested he could not

bring himself to believe that St. John had him in view when he wrote the "Apocalypse."

PRINTING.

In considering the consequences of this invention, says Sir Walter Scott, I read, with certain augury, the most awful and portentous changes. When I reflect with what slow and limited supplies the stream of science hath hitherto descended to us; how difficult to be obtained by those most ardent in its search; how certain to be neglected by all who regard their ease; how liable to be diverted, or altogether to be dried up, by the invasions of barbarism; can I look forward without wonder and astonishment to the lot of succeeding generations, on whom knowledge will descend like the first and second rains, uninterrupted, unabated, unbounded; fertilizing some grounds and overflowing others; changing the whole form of social life, destroying kingdoms, and overthrowing religions.

PRINTING BY STEAM.

(*Leigh Hunt's Apologue.*)

During a wonderful period of the world, the kingdoms of the earth leagued themselves together to destroy all opposition, to root out, if they could, the very thoughts of mankind. Inquisition was made for blood. The ears of the grovelling lay in wait for every murmur. On a sudden, during the great hour of danger, there arose in a hundred parts of the world, a cry, to which the cry of the blatant beast was as a whisper. It proceeded from the multiplication-creature, which had already turned the cheeks of the tyrants palid. It groaned, and it grew loud; it spoke with a hundred tongues; it grew fervidly on the ear, like the noise of a million of wheels. And the sound of a million of wheels *was* in it, together with other marvellous and awful voices. There was the sharpening of swords, the braying of trumpets, the neighings of war-horses, the laughter of solemn voices, the rushing by of lights, the movement of impatient feet—a tread as if the world were coming. And ever and anon, there were pauses with "a still small voice," which made a trembling in the night-time; but still the glowing sound of the wheels renewed itself, gathering early towards the morning:—and when you came up to one of these creatures, you saw, with fear and reverence, its mighty conformation, being like wheels indeed, and a great vapour. And now the vapour boiled, and the wheels went rolling, and the creature threw out of its mouth visible words, that fell into the air by millions, and spoke to the uttermost parts of the earth. And the nations (for it was a loving though a fearful creature) fed upon the words like upon the air they breathed:—and the "rulers" paused, for they knew their masters.

PURITY OF MIND.

"All that polluted life's first source,
Will float along its downward course;
And dark will be each future year,
Unless the spring of life is clear."

QUOTATIONS.

1. It is not easy to quote happily, and, according to Bayle, there is not less invention in the just and happy application of a thought found in a book, than in being the first author of its expression. The art of quotation requires more delicacy in the practice than those conceive who can see nothing more in a quotation than an extract.

2. The wisdom of the wise, and the experience of ages, may be preserved by quotation. It is against the nature of things to pretend that in a work to prove and clear up facts, an author should only make use of his own thoughts, or that he ought to quote very seldom. We risk a worse expression of an opinion that we find felicitously expressed. Too open and generous a revelation of the chapter and the page of the original quoted, has often proved detrimental to the legitimate honours of the quoter. Let future quoters make their original researches of authorities, rather than they should appropriate my quotations; for the quoter is never quoted: he who yields up his authorities seldom becomes one.

RELIGION.

“Religion,” which, without satisfying the reason, appeals only to the imagination and the feelings, can only force the really intellectual portion of the community into scepticism.

RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

As “religious truth” means for each religionist his own convictions on subjects out of the reach of experimental proof, Christians could not fail to sanctify all their most virulent passions under the name of “*faith*.” Persecution was let loose by the church against those who defended their “truth”—their orthodoxy—their own convictions,—human blood was shed in torrents; while those who murdered the honest and sincere supporter of his own opinions, his own *faith*, raised exultingly their ensanguined hands to “*heaven*,” fancying themselves very much applauded by “*god*” for having destroyed his enemies.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

To extinguish opinions in which large bodies of men can be brought to concur, extirpation is the only persecution which can be successful, or even not destructive of its own object. Extirpation is conceivable, but the extirpation of a numerous sect is not the work of a moment. Perseverance in such a process for a sufficient time, and with the necessary ferocity, is happily impracticable. Rulers are mortal; shades of difference in capacity, character, opinion, arise among their successors. Aristocracies themselves, the steadiest adherents to established religions and revered principles of rule, are exposed to the contagion of the times. Higher causes are in action for this same purpose. Even if pity could be utterly rooted out, and conscience struck dumb; if mercy were smothered, and fellow-feeling with our brethren were extinguished—even in this direful state, the infirmities,

may, the vices of men—indolence, vanity, weariness, inconstancy, distrust, suspicion, fear, anger, mutual hatred, and hostile contest, would do some part of the work of the exiled virtues, and dissolve the league of persecutors long before the conscientious could be exterminated. The flagrant inconsistency of all religious intolerance is a poison in its veins.

RELIGIOUS EXCLUSION.

When once a particular system is surrounded by a bulwark of prejudice, when once its defenders have brought the majority to believe that the rejection of it is a mark of depravity and perdition—what but the name of liberty is left? The obstacles to inquiry are as real, and may be as powerful, as in the neighbourhood of the inquisition. The multitude dare not think, and the thinking dare not speak. The right of private judgment may thus, in a Protestant country, be reduced to a nullity. It is true that men are sent to the Scriptures; but they are told, before they may go, that they will be driven from the church on earth and in heaven, unless they find in the Scriptures the doctrines which are embodied in the popular creed. They are told, indeed, to inquire for themselves; but they are also told at what points inquiry must arrive, and the sentence of exclusion hangs over them if they happen to stray, with some of the best and wisest men, into forbidden paths—into “heresy.” Now, this “Protestant liberty” is, in one respect, more irritating than Papal bondage. It mocks as well as enslaves us. It talks to us courteously as friends and brethren, whilst it rivets our chains. It invites, and can charge us to look with our own eyes, but, with the same breath, warns us against seeing anything which orthodox eyes have not seen before us. Is this a state of things favourable to free inquiry?

RELIGIOUS NOVELS.

It is quite common now to mix up novels and “theology,” which is much like January and May. Not only is it unnatural and in bad taste, but it spoils both the novel and the sermon, for novel-readers skip the latter and load it with execration as a nauseous cheat and discordant intrusion.

RETARDED SCIENCE.

1. With all who make a proficiency in the sciences, founded on wise and delicate observation, it unavoidably happens that much of their knowledge perishes with themselves, and much of the light collected by a long course of experience and observation becomes completely extinguished.

2. The experienced eye, the power of perceiving minute differences and fine analogies which discriminate or unite the objects of science, and the readiness of comparing newly observed phenomena with others already treasured up in the mind,—these are accomplishments which no rules can teach, and no precepts can put us in possession of. This is a portion of knowledge which every man must acquire for

himself, and which nobody can leave behind as an inheritance to his successors.

3. The perpetual accumulation of knowledge among civilized men, is continually retarded by the fact that considerable portions of the science that grows up, must also perish with the individuals.

RETIREMENT.

An attachment to solitude is the surest preservation against the ills of life.

RETROSPECTS.

There are few persons, however fortunate, who can look back through the period of their life, and not feel somewhat of disappointment in the retrospect; few persons whose fortunes the world envy, to whom the token of past time, suddenly obtruded on their remembrance, does not awaken the mortification of hopes destroyed and wishes deceived, which that world has never known: we tell our triumphs to the crowd, but our own hearts are the sole confidants of our sorrows.

REVERSES.

Of all changes, that from affluence to dependence is one which, while it most imperatively calls for assistance, yet makes that very assistance a task of the utmost delicacy.

REVOLUTIONS.

Every independent nation, even when it does not possess free institutions, has, to a certain extent, a remedy for its own evils within itself: that remedy is a severe, but necessary one, revolt. The liberties of all countries have been laid in such revolts. When misrule reaches a certain point; when human life, disjoined from human happiness, loses its value,—a rising takes place, new forms, new officers, are demanded, and a new course begins to be run. Even the dread of such revolutions, the knowledge that they are possible, forms a strong check on the tyrannical exercise of authority.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

If, through hope merely of reward, or fear of punishment, a man be incited to do the good he hates, or restrained from doing the evil to which he is not otherwise in the least degree averse—there is, in this case, no virtue or goodness whatsoever; his good conduct is intrinsically of as little worth as if he acted in his natural way, when under no dread or terror of any sort. There is no more of rectitude in such reformation than there is meekness or gentleness in a tiger strongly chained, or innocence of mischievousness in a monkey under the discipline of the whip.

RICH MEN.

The man who is born rich, and continues so through life, never knows mankind, never knows what the world is made of. Haunted from his cradle to his grave by the lies or the flatteries of parasites,

he grows old without experience, lives without imbibing the philosophy of life, and, kept ignorant and enslaved by his deceivers and his passions, he dies in his leading-strings. While he hugs himself on his superior advantages, he exhibits that fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what it imports men most to know.

RICHES.

It is not a small benefit that philosophy confers on human happiness by placing in a clear light the vanity of certain imaginary advantages. Thus it exhibits the extreme folly of sacrificing all the independence, the joys, and tranquillity of life, for the sake of amassing inordinate wealth; or of wasting strength, time, and almost every true enjoyment, for the sake of ambition, show, or fame. The injury which attends this folly can only be surpassed by the extent of that moral depravity which too often springs from it; for nothing is more certain than that the depravity of taking imaginary advantages for real, and means for ends, not only destroys the very possibility of true happiness, but generates a host of vices destructive to every germ of what is good and noble in the mind, and more hostile to virtue than even the most unrestrained sensuality; for sooner or later, sensuality restrains itself; whereas the propensity to strive after the means and to forget the end, predominates the more the longer it lasts; and the mind, governed by deeply rooted prejudices and passions, finds it more and more difficult to return to nature and truth in its judgment on the value of things and in the direction of the will. How much then does philosophy contribute to the morality and to the happiness of mankind, by teaching us, whatever we do, always to preserve the consciousness of a rational intention.

RIGHT TO PROPAGATE BELIEF.

To have the right of believing, without having the right to propagate our beliefs, is no more a right than is possessed by every human being, even under the most cruel and despotic government. Liberty of thought can never be denied by oppression, but only liberty of action; and the moment we are deprived of the right to propagate our opinions, we are enslaved.

“SABBATH.”

In all countries in which Calvinism has ever had a footing, it would seem that the suppression of all cheerful feelings is deemed essential to the due observance of the “Sabbath-day.”

SECTS.

From the moment that a sect exists, all the individuals that compose it are made answerable for the errors and faults of each of them. The necessity of remaining united obliges them to suppress truths which would hurt men whose suffrage or adherence is useful to the sect. They are obliged to form in some sort a body of doctrine, and the opinions which form parts of it, adopted without examination, be-

come, in the long run, real prejudices. The possibility of improvement is excluded; for it is the evil of sects to admit of no change. All that is *professed* must be stuck to, and all that is proposed of true and useful for adoption, even if recommended by the most enlightened men of a nation, is rejected without examination. The abuses, the standing errors of every kind, have for defenders that large collection of proud and *mediocre* men, the violent enemies of everything that possesses *eclat* and celebrity. Scarcely does a truth appear, when those whom it would injure brand it with the name of a sect already odious, and are sure to prevent its obtaining a hearing.

SERVING OTHERS.

It is melancholy to reflect how often the warm impulses of kindness grow chilled by the prospect of a wearying perseverance, and how many causes for repentance arise out of the violation of laws which we have imposed upon ourselves. The truth of this observation is constantly exemplified by the patronizing propensity which is the property of every good-natured unthinking person who may happen to be endowed with means or influence. Promises are made without regard to the difficulty of performance, or the capacity of the object; and hopes are raised of which the disappointment has many a time depressed a life, which would otherwise have been contented and happy, into sorrow, discontent, and even death itself.

SIMPLE AIRS.

A manifestation of enjoyment of the simplest yet the most fascinating shape that any succession of musical sounds can take—namely, a complete melody, is surely evidence of a taste for music, rude and unenlightened though it be. This produces a desire to hear others of the same kind. A learned and elaborate harmony is played; the melody is missed, because it is interwoven in the mass, not brought out from it; and the uninstructed ear finds a musical noise which does not captivate because it is not understood, and the will being piqued, it is disliked: qualities that we cannot appreciate, our self-love counts as defects.

SOLDIER—RECIPE FOR MAKING ONE.

First catch the creature, in any manner which may be readiest. After the animal is caged, he must be broken-in: cut off his shaggy locks, wash him at the pump, burn his savage costume, and put on him the orderly trappings of the other creatures with whom he is to pull in concert. Then place him in a press, turn out his toes, toss up his chin, punch in his anterior projections, hang dead-weights from his arms, and at the word *march*, give him an impetus in a forward direction, and at the same moment make him hold up his right leg at an angle of 45° with the horizon; make him perform the same *pedævre* with his left leg, repeat it with his right, and again with his left, until he nearly faints; when his progress grows unsteady, give him a kind of half blow on the side of the head, a smart push with a

cane, and a shake of the whole body, under pretence of setting him in the right line. When you have accustomed him to submit to be shoved about to your heart's content, fasten a black collar about his neck, which will cut his chin unless he keeps his eyes off the ground, and then send him to his kennel, or barrack, to his bread and water, or to wash his shirt, brush his harness, or pipe-clay his leggings, until the time shall come round again for the wheel and square, eyes left, and spine stiffened. Forbid the animal to pair; consider him without kindred; teach him to cut all ties of blood, heart, or soul; teach him that his officer is his god, and that his word is his law; that his body, strength, power, and life are his keepers' property, and that when they bid him go into fire or water against an "enemy," to shoot, cut, or thrust, to charge, fall, or run—that it is his duty to obey: obedience must be his sole idea.

SPONTANEOUS PRODUCTION.

Francis Redi was one of the philosophers who had a principal share in overthrowing many errors proceeding from a blind attachment to ancient notions, especially that of the generation of animals by means of putrefaction. His experiments were considered as decisive in proving that no production of animal or vegetable life takes place in circumstances where the access of ova is debarred.

STONE-TOADS.

Notwithstanding the numerous instances on record, apparently well attested, of the vitality of these reptiles, under the joint additional singularity of exclusion of air and privation of food, it is clear, from experiments that have been made, that the commonly received belief that they can exist in blocks of stone and stems of solid wood, is perfectly false. It is concluded that there was a want of sufficiently minute and accurate observation in the accounts frequently reported. In the cases of toads, snakes, and lizards that have occasionally issued from cavities in blocks of stone broken in a quarry, or from butts of trees, no examination could possibly be made previously to the reptile being discovered in the hollow part by breaking the mass, and then it is too late to ascertain whether or not there was any hole or crevice by which the animal may have been enabled to breathe, and also have been supplied with abundance of insects.

"SUPREME BEING."

First disprove infinity; prove the universe to be finite and comprehended; and then we may be consistently called upon to consider the subject of admitting, or believing in, a "supreme being."

SUSPICION.

The excess of distrust is peculiar to weak minds. It characterizes those whose understanding is but little developed. The least suspicious are the men of genius, the learned, and the scientific; so true is it that cultivated minds and enlarged intellects acquire a moral superiority over ordinary men, whom therefore they need not fear.

SWIMMING.

"I cannot forbear observing," says Mr. Dalton, "on the absurdity of those who remark that all people might swim, and that it is only from fear or ignorance of the art that some fail in the attempt. When we see that some persons are heavier than water, and others '8 of that weight, it would be just as plausible for a piece of deal to upbraid a piece of *lignum vitæ* with the inability to swim from fear or from want of skill in the art, which the deal considered of easy acquisition."

TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES.

The whole system of temperance and tea-total societies is but a new edition of monasticism. The monk retired from the world, rather than "use as not abusing it;" and the anti-whiskey man runs from "blue ruin" and its sister spirits, rather than resist the intemperate use of them. Both are indolent ways of overcoming evil and ruinous passions.

THIRST FOR APPLAUSE.

So close is the connection between all that is noblest and all that is weakest in human nature; so nearly allied is the honest love of fame to the most contemptible vanity—that the wisest and the best are content to accept the spurious currency of applause. With all their fortitude, they cannot wholly resist the pleasure which the "puff of a dunce" may afford, nor always bear up against the depression consequent on unmerited neglect.

TIDES.

Though the sun has above twenty million times more matter than the moon, yet being four hundred times more remote, it therefore exerts three times less influence in raising the tides. While the ocean swells out both under and opposite to the sun, it turns another trebly more protuberant spheroid towards the moon. These elevations, differently combined, produce the variable heaving of the waters which constitutes the general tide.

TITHES.

1. Priests have no right to be paid by a portion of the people upon the *patent of doing a duty* for them which they do not do, and which the people do not desire them to do; they should be paid by that portion of the people for *whom* they do that duty, and by none others.

2. "Religion," *politically* speaking, should be considered as nothing but a profession, or a business: every man who calls for the assistance of a priest of any sect or sort, has a right to pay him for the time and trouble which he requires from him, just as he would fee his doctor or attorney for their services; but certainly the man who does not make use of a "clergyman," has no more right to support one, than a person who always goes bare-foot would have to be charged by a shoe-maker for boots and shoes which he had never worn.

3. Grotius says—"If a priest seizes upon the property of others, under whatever name or pretence of religion, for a supposed prescriptive right, he transgresses against the fundamental laws of society."

TOLERATION.

1. Dr. Wardlaw says, and the saying is honourable to himself and useful to the world,—“It is a truth that men *ought* no longer to submit to be led, and it would be a joyful truth, if truth it were, that they are *resolved* no longer to be led blindfold in ignorance. It is a truth, that the principle which leads men to judge and treat each other, not according to the intrinsic merit of their actions, but according to the accidental and involuntary coincidences of their opinions, is a *vile* principle. It is a truth that man should not render account to man for his belief.”

2. The very word *toleration*—seeing a right to tolerate supposes the existence of a corresponding right to restrain and coerce—is a term which, in such an application of it, no language ought to retain; men should be as free to think and speak as they are to breathe.

3. Legal restraint and suppression have invariably had the effect of giving tenfold prevalence to the dreaded truth; and measures of coercion, whilst they have made hypocrites of thousands, have never made, and never can make, one genuine convert to the cause of error.

TRAVELLING.

“————— Dream at-home,
If you would still have visions haunt you,
Trust me, if once abroad you roam,
That mar-all, truth, will disenchant you.”

TRINITY.

Orthodox “religion” requires of us, upon pain of eternal “damnation,” to believe that there are three “gods” (it would be just as true to say, with the ancient heathens, there are thirty gods), and, at the same time, upon pain of “damnation,” to believe in one “god,” and that these three “gods” are one “god.” Alas! alas! for the incalculable injury that has been done to man’s welfare by the incomprehensible effusions of systematized bigotry.

UNPROFITABLE TALENTS.

1. In real life it is no unusual thing to meet with men seemingly accomplished for the greatest undertakings, clear in thought and dauntless in deed, still meditating mighty works, and urged by all motives and occasions to their performance,—whose existence is, nevertheless, one unperforming dream; men of noblest, warmest affections, who are perpetually wringing the hearts of those whom they love best; whose sense of rectitude is strong enough, and whose understanding is wise enough, to amend and instruct a world, while their acts are the hapless issues of casualty and passion.

2. The turbulent, the discontented, the restless, the fickle, and the capricious, however talented, rarely fail to live in uneasiness, incess-

sant struggle, precarious circumstances, and contempt; and in their declining period of life, they often suffer all the hardships of abject poverty.

UPSTARTS.

It has been often observed that people who obtain unexpected dignities or elevations, are jealous of the distinction to which they have been raised, and rigorously exact such marks of homage as assure them of their eminence, while those who have always been accustomed to them, from having been born to exaltation, either receive them as a matter of course, or are quite indifferent to their omission.

USING TALENTS.

There hardly appears to be any medium between a public life and a private one. He who prefers the first must put himself in a way of being serviceable to his fellow-men, if he has a mind to be of any consequence among them; nay, he must not refuse being in a certain degree even dependant upon some men who already are so. If he has the good fortune to light on such as will make no ill use of his humility, there is no shame in this; if not, his ambition ought to give place to a reasonable pride, and he should apply to the cultivation of his own mind those abilities which he has not been permitted to use for the service of others.

VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

What can be so monstrously contrary to common sense, and common rectitude, as that the personal righteousness of one man should be placed to the credit of another man who is personally unrighteous; John is flogged because Thomas told a lie, in order that Thomas might escape with impunity:—this is virtually the doctrine of the fanatical fools who are called “evangelicals.”

VICIOUS ALLUREMENTS.

Temptation lies in wait for youth at every turning and by-path; but when youth starts with the design of voluntarily entering her fatal snares, the toils are wound about the prey with treble strength, and rarely, if ever, is it disentangled.

VISITS.

The design of many people in visiting, is not to better one another but to spy out and make faults, and not to amend them; to get time off their hands; to show themselves in their fine clothes; and to recommend themselves to the mutual contempt of each other by a plentiful impertinence.

VULGAR ERROR.

1. The discovery of active molecules obtained from substances which could not possess animal vitality, as glass, flint, &c., overthrows all reasoning founded on the doctrine of vitality, or the hypothesis that all matter has life.

2. When mineral substances, insoluble in water, are reduced to powder and suspended in water, one kind of motion will be progressive, the particle always advancing forward more or less rapidly, and changing places with the neighbouring particle; another kind will be a vibratory action, in which the particle, seems rapidly to oscillate backwards and forwards about an axis nearly vertical; at other times the particle will advance, then recede, then advance, and in that manner oscillate, moving at such times over a space equal to a half or a whole diameter, two or three complete vibrations occurring in a second. With particular substances, linear arrangements of particles are frequently observed, the appearance then resembling a twisting or vermicular movement.

3. It is confounding the distinctions which divide animals from each other, to affirm that an integral part of a quadruped, having been reduced to utter inertness, should revivify itself, acquiring a head with its complete organization to control its movements, and a mouth whereby to receive its sustenance: for a hair taken from a horse's tail to spring to independent existence and become a water-serpent, is too monstrous and absurd to admit of belief. If it be possible for one quadruped to produce snakes, another may; and if snakes, why not other and more monstrous forms of existence?

4. The order which prevails in the infinite world proves that every thing acts by an immutable process which has been the same eternally, and forbids the revolting idea that inert matter springs to life in odious and degraded shapes, remote from its generic descent.

5. Generic life, or order, being eternal, can never be revealed as a first principle.

WAR.

1. War has means of destruction more formidable than the cannon and the sword. Of the thousands and tens of thousands that perish during the course of a campaign, a very small part ever feel the stroke of an enemy; the rest languish in tents and ships, amidst damps and putrefactions, victims, of hunger and cold, pale, torpid, spiritless and helpless, gasping and groaning, unpitied among men, made obdurate by long continuance of hopeless misery, and are at last whelmed in pits, or heaved into the ocean, without notice and without remembrance. By incommodious encampments and unwholesome stations; by want of nutritious food, and by exposure to the inclemency of the severest climates, where courage is useless, and enterprize impracticable, fleets are silently dispeopled, and armies sluggishly melted away.

2. If the old system attempted to reduce the soldier to a mere automaton, the new one reduced him to a mere atom, for the only principle from which it never deviated, was an utter disregard of human life and human suffering.

WASTED CONTROVERSY.

Human life is too precious to be wasted on men whose lungs are

of brass, who blot whole reams of paper with verbiage and scandal, and whose consciences are under no visible restraint of truth or charity.

WRITERS.

The lesser ability in writing may be attended with the greater power, as an ordinary writer will use to pick and broach sentences more on a level with the comprehensions and more soothing to the prejudices of readers, than a person of deeper views. The *best* instructor is not likely to be most willingly listened to; in fact, the way to be most extensively popular is, to flatter prejudice, encourage vanity, and please the ear by the harmonious resoundings of easily understood common places.

YIELDING OF SELF.

Howard, the philanthropist, said—"our superfluities should be given up for the conveniences of others; our conveniences should give place to the necessities of others; and even our necessities should give way to the extremities of others."

YOUTH.

1. If the mind is not cultivated in early life, we lose an opportunity of intellectual improvement which no study in a later period, can repair.

2. He who neglects to use his reason in youth may be pretty sure of becoming a mere driveller before his hairs are gray.

ADDITIONS TO CHAPTER XII. PART II.

1.

"O woman! lovely woman! nature formed thee
To temper man; we had been brutes without thee."

1. Life is too short to be long in forming its more tender and its happier connections.

2. To a young man, whose feelings are fresh and as yet unblunted by worldly experience, there is a charm even in the most unimpassioned intercourse with the other sex. Woman! How vast a charm is comprized in the narrow compass of a word! In this single abstraction, unconnected, it may be, with any individual reality, are united all man's purest dreams of happiness, all his brightest conceptions of imaginary beauty and loveliness.

3. Love is the best provision for all comfort—to soothe the brow of care—to heal the heart of affliction—to adorn the dullest and gloomiest scenes of the great drama of life.

4. Even the pursuits of wisdom, and the discoveries of science, engrossing as they are, and often delightful, are inefficient to take the sting from life. changing its burthen to gladness: this is left for

the affections; and the best form of affection, from the excess of its sympathy, is love.

5. If there be one hour in which we feel only the time being—in which we feel sensibly that we live, and that those moments of the present are full of the enjoyment, the rapture of existence—it is when we are with the *one* person whose life and spirit have become the great part and principle of our own.

6. She who marries an idler, who will hang upon her society till he is wearied, and then seek recreation elsewhere, has not so many chances for happiness as the wife whose husband is compelled to tear himself from her company for his duties, and gladly returns to it for his enjoyments.

7. Women of strong tempers always govern their husbands; women of strong minds influence them. A man's sole refuge against an illtempered wife is to run away from her, which he generally does when he can.

8. Oh! ye women, who have the ill-luck to be married to fools attempt not to reason with your partners; expect not to fascinate, and despair of persuading them. Wit, grace and understanding, are only influential with men of feeling and intellect; to such arms the sensible and clever never fail to yield: the only chance you have with a fool is to subdue him.

9. Foolish husbands are always jealous of their authority, and fearful of being supposed to be ruled; once launched into an opposition, they persevere in spite of conviction, because they think it does not become their dignity to be less wise than a woman.

“——— And this is woman's fate—
All her affections are call'd into life
By winning flatteries, and then thrown back
Upon themselves to perish: and her heart,
Her trusting heart, filled with weak tenderness,
Is left to bleed and break!”

“——— Ah! there are some
Can trifle, in cold vanity, with all
The warm soul's precious throes;—to whom it is
A triumph that a fond devoted heart
Is breaking for them;—who can bear to call
Young flowers into being, and then crush them!
Affections trampled on, and hopes destroyed,
Tears wrung from very bitterness, and sighs
That waste the breath of life!”

10. It has been the lot of some to witness more real tyranny and self-will exercised under the form of excessive devotedness than under any other.

11. As ambition may be considered the chief passion of men, though in a much larger and more general proportion, is its contemptible corruption, vanity, the governing principle of women. In them, its operations are so palpable as to render unnecessary those fine and difficult analyses which are frequently required to trace the actions of men, through various processes and modifications, up to

the simple motive. The constitutions of many girls may have contained originally the germs of those gentle and virtuous affections which are proper to their sex, but they are early rooted out to make room for exotics, and are choaked by the growth of those noxious plants. Pride is substituted for love; dissimulation for sincerity; and vanity, the only weed that is indigenous to the soil, is trained and watered until it arrives at maturity, and becomes the prolific parent of many vices. The prevailing system of education violently turns nature from its course, and has separated, by an impassable barrier, the natural from the artificial character of the sex.

12. Upon what love is, depends what woman is; and upon what woman is, depends what the world is. There is not a greater moral necessity than that of reformation in female education. The boy is a son; the youth is a lover; and no man should think lightly of the elevation of character, and the extension of happiness which woman's influence is capable of producing, and ought to be directed to the production of, in society.

"Woman, with whom we ever find
Our highest happiness combined—
Must she be will-less—thoughtless—all
Which men, for their good pleasure, call
Feminine?—Or shall she arise
And learn with us to scan the skies;
O'er meads and mountains with us roam,
And bring progressive science home;—
Search with us, knowledge life to bless,
And thus make exquisite man's happiness?"

2.

1. Delightful as the feelings of love may be, yet there is not a less satisfactory theme in the world for being treated in the abstract. To philosophize upon love would be equivalent to an attempt to compress the atmosphere in the grasp of the hand. It eludes the mind at every turn, and after all, it is reducible to a single expression; "*I love*," is all that can be said in words on the subject; the rest must be expressed between the lovers themselves, and however interesting their thoughts and their language may be to each other, they will be very indifferent to the mass of mankind.

2. Who shall say that it is a selfish feeling which looks in another's eyes to read one's own happiness, and holds another's welfare more precious than one's own? What path in after time will ever be so pleasant as that one walk which delayed on its way, and yet ended so soon? What discoveries of the wise, the witty, the eloquent, will ever have the fascination of a few simple words, or of the still but delicious silence which they broke?

3. Can the friendship of man, however ardent and sincere, be compared with the idolatry with which women give up soul and body to the man consecrated by their virgin affections? Friends may

share danger, nay more, their purses; they may give their aid, their counsel, and their pity; but they cannot sympathize: no, it is the woman who loves, she alone can soothe, watch with exhaustless affection and patience, endure the waywardness of mind and the vexatious absurdity which arise from sickness and sorrow.

4. Coquettes and flirts, male and female, are heartless; they substitute the ambition of conquest for an amiable wish to please; they prefer the triumphs of vanity to the happiness which accrues from mutual attachment; admiration and flattery are their food. The male coquet is ordinarily ten times worse than the female; because in general he does not stop at the mere stealing away the affections, but forms baser projects. A time comes to those of both sexes, when it would be bliss indeed to have a pure and immutable attachment, but the lost opportunity can never be regained. Then come those marriages for spite! your marriages of necessity, either of prudential circumstances, or to avoid being an old maid, or an antiquated bachelor, a solitary being deprived, in the vale of years, of the only solace for care of every kind, the only drop of real sweetness which nature mixes in our cup—that is, the society of lovely woman.

5. There are many women in whom the affections and moral sentiments predominate, for the developement of affection and sentiment is more quiet and unobtrusive than that of passion and intellect, and less observed; it is more common too and less remarked; but in women it generally gives the prevailing tone to the character, except where vanity has been made the ruling motive.

6. Characters in whom the affections and the moral qualities predominate over fancy, and all that bears the name of passion, are not when we meet with them in real life, the most striking and interesting, nor the easiest to be understood and appreciated; but they are those in whom in the long run, we repose with increasing confidence and with ever new delight.

7. A propensity to religious enthusiasm is often the accompaniment of an early susceptibility to love.

8. When people are married, the change in their circumstances is so great that they sometimes flatter themselves with the expectation of a wonderful transformation of character, both in themselves and in those with whom they have paired. The man fancies, perhaps, that however ill-tempered he has hitherto shown himself, he can never be out of humour with the charming creature who has trusted her happiness in his hands, and she is equally flattered by the hope that her influence will diffuse perpetual sunshine through his disposition, and as it regards herself, that although she has been but an indifferent daughter, nobody will surpass her as an excellent wife. In short, a complete conversion of all unpleasant qualities is to be accomplished, and clouds and tempests are to be kept at an eternal distance. When the illusions of fancy and intoxications of passion, however, are over; when the transient motives for restraint and contentment are gone, both characters will appear in their true colours. Some habits, it is

true, may be changed, but the general qualities still remain, to disturb and embitter, or, on the other hand, to soothe and sweeten domestic life.

9. When people understand that they must live together, they learn to soften by mutual accommodation the yoke which they know they cannot shake off. To be sure, if people come together in marriage with the extravagant expectation that all are to be halcyon days—the husband conceiving that all is to be authority with him, and the wife that all is to be accommodation to her—every body sees how this must end; but if they come together with a prospect of happiness, they must come with the reflection that, not bringing perfection in themselves, they have no right to expect it on the other side; that having respectively many infirmities of their own to be overlooked, they must overlook the imperfections of each other.

10. A bad temper, in a woman, poisons all her happiness, and “turns her milk to gall,” blights her youth, brings on premature, fretful old age; palliates all her enjoyments, banishes her friends, and renders her house comfortless and barren. Far different is the ripe, rich harvest of a home, made bright and happy by the sweet temper and mild deportment of an amiable woman, who, if afflictions cross her husband abroad, he finds comfort and consolation in his home, is happy in a companion whose temper is like the silver surface of a lake, calm, serene, and unruffled. An amiable temper is of inestimable value in the sum of domestic happiness, because, with that alone, the whims of a cross husband may be subdued, many vices overcome; the boisterous may be tamed, the unruly conquered, and the fretful tranquillized.

11. Wives and their husbands ought in prudence to forget their offences to each other as soon as may be. Life is too short, and conjugal tranquillity too uncertain to admit of dwelling long upon subjects of irritation.

12. The world has been very negligent in the education of daughters; their care is laid out entirely upon the sons; and, as if women were a distinct species, they leave them to themselves without any helps, without thinking that they compose one half of the world; that the two sexes are necessarily united together by alliances; that the women make either the happiness or the misery of the men, who, if reasonable themselves, always feel the want of having their wives so too; that they are a great means of the rise and ruin of families; that they are entrusted with the education of the children in their early youth—a season of life in which they receive the liveliest and deepest impressions. In nothing therefore are people so much mistaken as in the education they give to young women; they merely design them to *please*, they give them no instruction but for the ornaments and graces, they flatter their self-love, they give them up to effeminacy, to false opinions; they give them no lessons of virtue and resolution. Surely it is not reasonable, or rather it is downright folly, to imagine that such an education should not turn to their prejudice.

13. The whole education of females—and by education is meant every lesson of their lives from the cradle to the grave—developes their vanity ; and it seldom happens that as a compensation for this, they are placed in situations which can give vigour and independence to their self-approbation. The infancy of females is allowed to linger amid debilitating trifles, which prolong their childhood beyond the years of youth. Their toys are dolls, their ambition finery, their study dress ; and they are taught to anticipate on puppets the coquetry which they afterwards display upon their own persons. By words and actions, and examples, their constant lesson is, that to please and dazzle is their province ; to captivate their right. These lessons are soon applied to practice, and the love of admiration is fomented by the flattering tributes it receives. A wider intercourse with society enlarges its activity, and every homage paid to their charms, every compliment, every wish to please them, every attempt to gain their affections, every sigh, every vow, every prayer, adds fuel to the flame. It is difficult to be thus idolized, and not to be vain. The only thing, which, at such a period of their lives, can modify the sentiment, is the love, the approbation of a man of sense.

14. Never yet was there a woman really improved in attraction by mingling with the motley throng of the *beau monde*. She may learn to dress better, to step more gracefully ; her head may assume a more elegant turn, her conversation become more polished, her air more distinguished ; but in point of *attraction* she acquires nothing. Her simplicity of mind departs, her generous confiding impulses of character are lost ; she is no longer inclined to interpret favourably of men and things ; she listens without believing, sees without admiring, has suffered persecution without learning mercy, and been taught to distrust the candour of others by the forfeiture of her own. The freshness of her disposition has vanished ; hard lines are perceptible in her very soul, and crows' feet contract her very fancy. No longer pure and fair as the statue of alabaster, her beauty, like that of some painted waxen effigy, is tawdry and meretricious. It is not alone the rouge upon her cheek and the false tresses adorning her front, which repel the ardour of admiration ; it is the artificiality of mind with which such efforts are connected that breaks the spell of beauty.

15. There is a trifling disposition, too common among the female world, which makes youth ridiculous, maturity insignificant, and old age contemptible.

16. He who would endeavour to call in question the ability of the sex to rise to moral or mental excellence. should be considered as a villain who grounds his assertion on the triumphs he has obtained over their innocence, or as a fool whose ignorance of the subject is made manifest by his opinion.

17. Moral prejudice is not stronger in one sex than in the other, provided women see and hear for themselves as men may. But this is not permitted to one woman in a hundred. The ninety and nine

are shut up at home; are instructed to believe in morals as in religion; what the priest preaches, and to feel horror for any "heretical" doctrines, even before they learn what they are. Some of them, in their simplicity, do feel that horror, and almost all are compelled by vulgar opinion to *affect* it.

18. Man seems to have made a law that the woman shall not share with him any public honours; let her but appear beyond the pale of domestic life, and he instinctively drives her back with obloquy and foul charges: it is an unanimous proceeding; but is there no hope of remedy?

19. That women do not rise to a better condition, and strengthen their minds to a greater pride, is frequently their own fault and the fault of men—that is to say, a vice in the organization of society. It is by exercising them in the moral and intellectual sciences; by giving to female education, in its widest sense, a greater resemblance to that of the male sex, by alluring women, or at least allowing them to come over to the thoughts and business of men; by assimilating their minds to minds that are stronger, that this end may be obtained.

20. As mental civilization is the highest condition of male society, so is it that of women; and history shows that they never stand upon so noble a footing, and never feel their own importance and value so much, as when they have been gently pressed forward in the career of social improvement, and that man himself never reaches so noble a state as when he lends his helping hand to his weak and amiable companion.

"Who can then such knowledge lend,
As to them a light might show,
When they cannot comprehend
All they wish to know?
Who shall guide them as they walk?
Who shall teach them as they talk?"

21. The prevailing manners of an age depend, more than we are aware of or are willing to allow, on the conduct of the women, this is one of the principal things on which the great machine of human society turns. Those who allow the influence which female graces have in contributing to polish the manners of men, would do well to reflect how great an influence female morals must also have on their conduct. How much then is it to be regretted that women should ever sit down contented to polish, when they are able to reform—to entertain, when they might instruct.

"Women are ever masters when they please,
And cozen with their kindness; they have spells
Superior to the wand of the magician;
And from their lips the words of wisdom fall
Like softest music on the listening ear—
O, they are matchless in supremacy!"

22. How repugnant is it to our best feelings to hear the hackneyed instances repeated of the evils women have brought upon the earth

from the fabled "*creation of the world*" to the period of our own useless existence! The Bible "mother of mankind" is abused for having when a pretty girl, devoted "*all*" her posterity to "sin misery, and death," by her commission of the "first act of disobedience" to the divine commander, when tempted by that fabled horned snake to eat a sweet apple. Milton wrote the following trash, in ridicule, it is to be hoped :—

" Oh ! why did God,
Creator *wise*, that peopled highest heaven
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With men, as angels, without feminine,—
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind ? This mischief had not then befallen,
And more that shall befall, innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares ! "

THE END.

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FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

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LETTER 1.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“ And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh ; and they shall be drunken with their own blood ; as with sweet wine ; and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer—the mighty one of Jacob.”—ISAIAH CXLIX.

“ For all the Gods of the nations are *Idols* ; but the Lord made the Heavens.”—PSALM XCVI.

CHRISTIANS,—Sensible that any attempt to disprove the existence (*whether as a God of flesh and blood—inspired prophet—or mere man*) of Jesus Christ will be met by a most vigorous opposition from Christian clergymen of all denominations—we are not unprepared for the encounter—nor shall we object to opposition, however earnest or even fierce in its character, if adorned by a kindly and loving spirit, which ever commands respect for arguments, even when they fail to reach the understanding. We, however, candidly confess that past experience does not warrant us in expecting so wise a course will be pursued by our Christian opponents—whose custom it is to answer an argument by torrents of invective, and overpower their opponents by eloquent abuse. Nevertheless, we shall not, by any mere personal considerations, be turned aside from the path duty has marked out and conscience has prescribed—nor do more than smile at any other species of opposition than that supported by facts drawn from the records of ancient times—nor surrender to the wielders of any weapons not

tempered and sharpened by the power of truth. Coarse, vulgar, and most unfair allusions (so frequent in public discussions, vitally affecting the highest interests of human beings, and therefore to be treated with a gravity suitable to their importance) may sometimes appear to give unscrupulous reasoners a temporary advantage—but in reality, they ever injure the cause they are intended to promote, and can only disgrace those who use them. To slander us will not be the best way to prove our arguments unsound, or our positions untenable—which, however, may easily be done, *if it can be done*, by theological professors, who are sufficiently numerous in these countries, and are certainly of no use, if not to expound and defend the doctrines of Christianity. Those who live by the altar are expected to support the altar—nor can they by any other means so effectually do this, as by proving the *reasonableness* of the worship offered up by those whose spiritual interests they profess themselves to be the ever-watchful guardians of. The duty of a Christian minister is “to watch for souls as one that must give an account”—and at all times *to act* as one “set for the defence of the Gospel”—and this, too, in the spirit that the Psalmist has ascribed to Jehovah: “But he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his wrath away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh—a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.”

These letters being written by a Jew, will not, it is hoped, weigh against the arguments they contain, nor fill the breasts of Christians with malice and disgust. Arguments are arguments, as truths are truths, no matter by whom urged—yet it must be confessed that all are not sufficiently enlightened to view the subject in this fair and candid manner—and prejudices against our race are still rife and strong in the bosoms of all—but the children of wisdom—who have the best assurance that individual and national differences, with the hates and heartburnings, the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, to which they give birth, will retrograde as a knowledge of the causes of these differences advances. The prejudices of caste and system have been the curse of Jew and Gentile, and involved all in one common moral ruin. Happily we live in an age when religious prejudices (the most fatal of all) are comparatively weak, and as a consequence the times are out of

joint for persecution. We live at an epoch when men are free to write and speak *almost* all they think, and as a consequence superstition is dying a natural death—truths which, in times not very remote, would startle and affright, are now received, not merely without fear, but with joy and gladness—nor are they merely loved because they *are* truths—but from a deeply rooted and hourly growing conviction that their acknowledgment and practical adoption by the wise of the earth will lead to universal redemption from sin and misery. When the people shall no longer “spend money for that which is not bread ; and their labour for that which satisfieth not ; but hearken delightfully (unto the voice of reason) ; and eat that which is good, and let their souls delight themselves in fatness.” From the Atlantic to the Ganges the faith of Mahomed at this day insults the understanding of at least a hundred and thirty millions of our fellow beings. Nearly an equal number of Hindoos in the vast Indian Empire, under British rule, drink the very dregs of superstition, while untold myriads wallow in the mire of an abominable idolatry, and in the worship of stocks and stones, dishonour that nature which, when guided by right reason, and that firm faith in truth, which is its first-born, would cover the earth with men as gods—wanting only their immortality. “For wisdom is better than rubies ; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.” Therefore should we “get wisdom, and above all things get understanding,” by maintaining the *right* and *duty* of every human being to speak and act according to the dictates of his conscience in matters of a religious nature. This is a truth which should be insisted upon by men of all creeds, castes, and denominations—as it is equally true, whether issuing from the lips of an Infidel or Christian—indeed, whatever is by nature good (as truth manifestly is) can neither be honoured nor disgraced by any human being. Yet that a Jew—one of a tribe *whose badge is sufferance*, remarkable for what Christian writers are pleased to call “stiffneckedness and obstinate credulity” upon some points, and equal stiffneckedness and obstinate *incredulity* with regard to others—should appear, without invitation, at the present alarming crisis in religious affairs, *to defend the scepticism of the Jewish people*—boldly and without reserve or mysticism—within hearing of the trumpets and organs of the Christian churches in this Christian land !—to proclaim a GREAT TRUTH, that will shake the world

of superstition from its centre to its circumference, and put to shame the worshippers of *idols* in all the countres of Europe!—will doubtless fill the enthusiastically credulous, who measure virtue by the length of belief, with horror and dismay—while hypocrites of every shape and hue, tost on the stormy ocean of contending passions, fear of exposure, and hate of the exposor—anger and affright struggling for mastery, making up the wretched sum of their existence—will gather courage from despair—when the highest note of hypocrisy will be sounded in every corner of the land—*lest that which hath been enjoyed so long, should be enjoyed no longer*—while the lover of his species will look on and smile, exclaiming in the joy of his heart: “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”

If it can be shown by clear and indisputable evidence that the history of Jesus Christ (as commonly received among Christians) is a forgery and a fiction—that he was *not* the son of a virgin called Mary, the wife of Joseph the carpenter—who conceived through the power of the Holy Ghost—and ceased not to be a virgin even after she had become a mother—that he did *not* converse with the Jewish doctors in the temple—nor preach to the populace in Jerusalem and elsewhere—nor perform miraculous cures—nor hold communion with the devil—nor, in point of fact—*do any one act that pious enthusiasts and ignorant devotees have ascribed to him*—and further, that neither a God nor a man called Christ was crucified by Pontius Pilate—the Procurator—and therefore could not by possibility have risen from the dead three days after an event which did not happen, and ascend into heaven, as is vulgarly *supposed*. If, we repeat, it *can* be clearly proved that the foregoing assertions about the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ—are *idle tales, having no foundation whatever in truth—mere fictions stolen from the mythological fables of ancient nations*—the very root of the Christian system will be as nought: “Therefore, as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust.”

We are aware that with some men the oracles of faith are better heeded than the oracles of sense—as is fully proved by the fact that a vast majority of the human race believe, not merely that

which is *superior* to sense, but that which is *contrary* to it. By such, the evidence of the senses is discarded, unless it accord and harmonise with the evidence of faith—nor will our most sanguine anticipations justify us in declaring our conviction that the multitude, *as* a multitude, can be at once taught to see as clearly, and argue as rationally, on religious as on other subjects. No—religious prejudices are the most inveterate, destructive, and firmly rooted of all—often sinking deep even into minds which have been polished by liberal and elegant society, and matured by anxious study—but who, nevertheless, have a tinge of religious fanaticism, which darkens reason—inducing moral disease of a specific and isolated character, which, wherever it exists, undermines veneration for the majesty of truth, weakens the perception of right and justice, and gives over its unhappy victim as a prey to contending feelings and opinions—which rend and tear his moral being. But there are others ready to renounce their prejudices the moment they are proved to *be* prejudices—and to these we address ourselves—and, as the first step to be taken by those who would instruct mankind, is to implant a desire to know—stimulate curiosity, and arouse a spirit of investigation that will not stop short in its career, but, if possible, grasp the Universe and all its wonderful phenomena—willing—nay eager to emancipate itself from the thralldom of error—we here offer to such the files and pincers of argument, the material for thought, the weight of which will crush Christian dogmatists, who, while steeped to the very lips in ignorance as to the source and origin of the religion they proclaim, are yet generally better instructed than the majority of their opponents, who, if more honest, have unfortunately (*if possible*) less actual knowledge of the matter in hand. To such honest reasoners we recommend the perusal of our Letters, not in a vain or boastful, but friendly spirit, so that they may hereafter exclaim: “And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft.”

Inquiry can only be carried forward *beneficially* by those who have knowledge of men and things—and whatever inquiry effects—as regards religious opinions—can never alarm the wise man—for *his* soul is comforted by the assurance that the reason of man is that which giveth dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, and will one day regulate and

keep within due bounds the passions of men. That—as “godliness profiteth in all things, both in this life and that which is to come”—godliness must have a moral basis—it being evident to all reflecting minds that any attempt to separate godliness from morality shows an utter ignorance of the true meaning of the terms—which being one and the same—is as a moral element incapable of division. Now, all morality is nourished by truth—that is to it as sap or vital juice to the plant—without which, it withers and dies. The rays of the morning sun act upon the bosom of the chilled earth, when life in its myriads of animal, insect and vegetable forms springs forth,—withdraw their cheering influence—all becomes stiffened and dead,—so without the rays of truth would all moral existences lose vitality, and perish. Whoever then suppresses truth, or injures the truth-teller—makes war upon morality—and thus aims a malignant and deadly blow at our happiness in this life and that which is to come. Yet with this truth staring us in the face the custom of mankind has been to hate those who hastened to deliver them from evil, by teaching them that morality is everything in the arithmetic of life. They have been called—*“Infidel scoffers—libertines—men who love not the law of the Lord—evil men and seducers—filthy dreamers, who set their mouths against the heavens—men who may be seen walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners and sitting in the seat of the scornful, instead of finding their delight in the law of the Lord”*—who are moreover *“waxing worse and worse”*—which seems barely possible in human beings so criminal. Such a farrago of abuse from the lips of Christian clergymen, directed against those who have been no otherwise criminal than in differing or departing from such opinions as the said clergymen deemed orthodox—is, as before noted, only disgraceful to its authors—but such is the line of argument ever adopted by the professors of law-made religions—who support their authority by vindictive personal slander—not seldom backed by sticks and staves, the dungeon, the faggot, and the rack!—in which most unjust and reckless course they have found a steady support in the fanaticism and vulgar prejudices of the multitude.

Some there are who will sit down to peruse these Letters in a warped spirit of incredulity, and not draw so much of intellectual nutriment from them as they otherwise might—because they argue that if Christ had no more a real existence than Adonis, Bacchus,

Mithra or Hercules, the fiction would long since have been discovered and exposed—so that the very existence of the belief in a *God, Prophet or Man*, called Christ, after the lapse of so many centuries from its origin, is sufficient guarantee for its soundness—which sort of reasoning is vastly popular, but most unsound—as will appear by reflecting that the Chinese have, from time immemorial, worshipped the God Foh, as an incarnate God—precisely as Christians believe in the existence of an incarnate God in the person of Jesus Christ—but surely no Christian will allow that the belief proves any thing more *than* the belief—they will surely not allow that the finger of the God Foh will work miracles!—as the Chinese now contend that it will, and would sooner suffer death than proclaim anything to the contrary. They held this belief before the advent of the Christian religion—centuries before the wonderful conception by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, yet no one of my Christian readers will think that a proof of its soundness. Those who think highly of antique opinions, simply because they are antique, would do well to remember that time may give error consistency and strength—and its roots a firmer hold of the soil in which they are cast—but cannot *consecrate* them. No prescriptive lease can show falsehood's right and title to reception among men—for as things are eternal, so is the nature of things eternal—and time *itself ever the same*, changes the form, and in a manner gives a new dress to things—but cannot change their essence or principle. What is true now was true a thousand years ago, and will be no less true *a thousand years hence*—as beautifully observed by the Psalmist: “A thousand years in the sight of God are but as yesterday, when it is past—and as a watch in the night.” To others who may object to our reasonings—not because they are inconclusive, but on the ground that the majority of mankind ever have been and ever must be kept in the dark, and their reason abused, if we desire to maintain even the appearance of virtue—we shall often have occasion to allude thereto in the course of these Letters.

It is matter of history that religion has hitherto been the most powerful political instrument of which corrupt legislators have ever availed themselves in order to effect their selfish purposes. By religion we mean the sentiment of faith in things beyond the visible, which when warped and made the plastic instrument of political tyrants, be-

comes a cruel and desolating superstition. Nor are the superstitious notions of the *canaille*, or lower orders, fostered and encouraged by bad men only, but even by those reputed wise and good, if indeed it is possible that men can be wise or good who hold the fatal maxim that it is *necessary to deceive the vulgar*. The practical application of this maxim gave birth to the opinions of the ancient philosophers spoken of by Cicero, who declared that "*all religious dogmas* had been imagined by ancient sages—with a view to guide those who could not be guided or restrained by reason. Numa—that wily Pagan so much lauded by those who would fain smother because they dare not develop the human intellect—to us appears little better than a cheat, who cunningly feigned to have secret conversations with the nymph Egeria, with a view the more readily to impose upon his countrymen and give them such a character and consistence as would fit them to bear the yoke of servitude—to which he gave a lasting character by the establishment of pontiffs, augurs, and that troop of deluders who for ages fattened on the vitals of the Roman people. As observed by a modern author, it would be superfluous to show how much *ancient* priests followed this maxim in keeping for themselves sublime doctrines, while they fed the people with fables—to which we may add, that the modern priests are not far behind in this particular—but in no country were priests and legislators of this class so numerous as in Egypt, where the trick, so profitable everywhere, of pretending to govern by divine authority, never failed of complete success. Diodorus Siculus (b. 1, p. 59) after mentioning that Muenes, the first mortal legislator among the Egyptians, pretended to derive his laws from Hermes, adds "similarly it is said that of the Grecians, Minos in Crete, and Lycurgus in Lacedæmon, gave out that they had derived their laws, the one from Jupiter, and the other from Apollo—and among the nations it is reported that this maxim obtained and was a cause of great advantage to the believers. We however who think that none can be permanently *advantaged* by falsehood who hold for maxim that it is necessary to *undeceive* the vulgar, promise our readers to do it—boldly; but at the same time, shall carefully avoid shocking—wantonly—the conscientious scruples of the most orthodox. Evidence none can gainsay will be furnished—let it be examined by those who are competent to the task—we ask no more, and fear not the result.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 2.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I *even* I am the Lord; and besides me there is no other.”—PSALM XLIII.

CHRISTIANS,—Those among you familiar with the old Jewish writings—as well as modern Jewish opinions—are aware that we reject the Christian Histories touching the divine character of Jesus Christ—and read as fable what is told of his resurrection from the dead—together with what is said of his *second* coming in power and glory, in order to judge the world—in a word, all that is included under the head Christian Doctrine. We have heard the Bible justly called “The Compendium of Ancient Hebrew Literature”—and it is not a little strange that the prophecies therein contained, so often triumphantly referred to by Christians as proofs of the soundness of their doctrines, are considered by the Jews as the very pillars of *their* heterodoxy—as to them it appears that a careful examination of the prophecies, so far from supporting, offer a complete refutation to the notion that the Messiah has fulfilled his mission upon earth according to the promises made by the God of Hosts through the mouths of his prophets. At the very time Christ is *said* to have appeared, the Jews, we are informed, rejected him as an imposter—except a few of the most credulous, who, like the credulous people of all other nations, are ever ready to swallow strange stories and follow the first cunning man who sets about religion-making—nor will the strangeness of his doctrine be any ob-

jection to it, but rather tell in its favour and swell the number of his dupes. Josephus observes—that the belief in a Messiah was a “vulgar error,” which obtained credence among some few of his nation, by their building their expectations “*on but one ambiguous oracle or prophecy found in their sacred books.*” What say the prophecies of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and those in Deuteronomy? By Ezekiel we are told that when God shall deliver Israel, “The tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. And they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I have broken the bonds of their yoke and delivered them out of the hands of those that served themselves of them.” And what was to be the sign of the covenant of Christ according to Jeremiah, but this: “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord; for they *shall* all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity. And I will remember their sin no more.” In Deuteronomy we read that “The Lord God will raise up unto thee (that is the Jews) a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken.” Daniel prophecies that in the days of the Messiah there should be only *one* kingdom and *one* king on earth, the King Messiah—and any who are sufficiently painstaking to read the beautiful Prophecies of Isaiah, will find it therein declared that there shall be *one* religion and *one* law throughout the world in the days of the Messiah.—What the above prophecies prove, we leave every candid reader to determine. For ourselves, we rely not upon interpretations of prophecy *merely*, but draw apologies for our bold declaration, that no such God, prophet, or mere man ever did exist, from the fountain of nature itself. We have grown grey in the study of these subjects, and hasten to give all it may concern the results of our experience.

The opinion that the character of Christ was a Mythos, has long been held by the most distinguished among the literati of Europe—but none have been so successful in working out and giving currency to that opinion as the celebrated Straus, a German writer of immense erudition and research, who, in his “New Life of Christ,” has done more than any who have preceded him to sap and undermine the foundation of the Christian System. The work is almost unknown in this country, as it has not yet been translated—and

few even among the élite of society care to read German books—besides the work is very expensive, and therefore beyond the reach of the millions—else, perhaps, would it be unnecessary that our Letters should appear—but *the poorest may read these*, and at their leisure—and as our philosophy is *in substance* the same as this learned writer, all may now become acquainted with his wonderful conceptions, in a modified, and we trust, simple form.

The term Mythos has been variously interpreted, but may be shortly stated as incarnated conception, or purely ideal personifications of certain vague and slender ancient traditions—partly true and partly false—in part historic, in part philosophic—imaginatively amplified—from which slender traditions and veritable history the materials were drawn of which the character of Christ was made up—precisely as was the case with Osiris and Isis with the Egyptians—Jupiter, Minerva, Venus, and others among the Greeks.

Our readers will be materially assisted in the comprehension of the full meaning of the term Mythos, by being reminded that it was formerly the custom with Hebrew, Pagan, and Christian doctors to write in an allegorical style—but as the unlettered may not know what is conveyed by the word allegorical, for their benefit we may observe that it is that mode of speech in which the words used enclose a meaning which does not appear by attending only to the letter of the discourses. Varro, a celebrated Roman writer, mentions three ages of the world—the unknown, the mythological (when everything was concealed, except to the few, under the veil of allegory), and the historical. We profess now to speak only of the second, or age of mythology. As to the first, or what Varro calls the unknown, we believe that it is treated of in the sacred book, but almost always under the veil of allegory, as will presently appear, when we refer to the books of Genesis, written by the sagest of all human lawgivers—if he can be called a *human* lawgiver who was inspired by God himself—stood face to face with The Most High—and received laws written by the finger of God amid the thunders of Mount Sinai. Zathraustes, Minos, Zamolxis, Muenes, Zaleucus (who gave out that he was assisted by Minerva), and Solon (who availed himself of the sanctity of Epimenides)—all professed to hold a divine right to teach and govern mankind—but who were then wise enough to question the validity of their credentials? The same, perhaps, may be said by sceptics with re-

spect to Moses, when he demanded submission to his laws on the ground that he had received them from a god called Iao—but we, as believers in the Mosaic dispensation, cannot admit that the doctrines of a Mohammed and a Moses rest on the same authority—to do this would be to overturn the Bible. No!—we claim for Moses a higher rank than can be claimed for any other human legislator—as one endowed by the Creator of all things with more of his divine spirit than ever fell to the lot of any other mortal. Our authority for saying this—is the Scripture—and no higher authority can a Christian desire, where we find it written, “And God said unto Moses *I am that I am* ; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, *I am* hath sent me unto you ;” and that Moses was valued more than any who had preceded him, must appear, when God spake unto him and said “I am the Lord. And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty ; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.” And yet it is past contradiction that the books written by Moses cannot, without the grossest absurdity, be taken *literally*, or as any other than figurative expressions—which are, and ever have been, a riddle or enigma to the vulgar—nor have we any evidence that Moses *desired* them to be understood by the Jewish people—for it is contrary to reason and common sense to suppose that if he desired them to understand, he was deficient in the power to make them do so. We need hardly insist that the pretended God called Jesus Christ, is inseparably connected with and dependent upon the literal interpretation of the first chapters—of the book of Genesis, where we read of the fall of man, and the great disorder introduced into the world by a serpent, which invites a woman (Eve) to pluck the forbidden fruit in a garden eastward of Eden, where the Lord put the man that he had formed, and then commanded the man, saying “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat : But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it ; for the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” The consequence of the fault said then to have been committed by our first parents, has been the knowledge of good and evil ; “And the Lord God said—Behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil ; and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live for ever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden

to till the ground from whence he was taken.” And unto the woman he said—“ I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth thy children ; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” The dullest will see that as Christ came into the world to repair the sins of the world, had man not fallen into sin there could have been no *atonement* for sin, unless we can suppose atonement for a sin that had never been committed. These two dogmas cannot be separated—they must stand or fall together. Without sinfulness practised by our first parents in the Garden of Paradise, Christ would not have appeared to bear our iniquities. Let us, then, examine the story about the fall of man, or that supposition of the double state of man, first created by the good principle or God, and afterwards passing under the dominion of the bad principle or Devil—and if we show that neither Moses, nor the learned among the Jews, at a subsequent period, considered it any otherwise than a cosmogonique fable—an ingenious allegory—through the veil of which the vulgar could not penetrate—precisely of the same nature as those made by the Magi or Persian priests respecting Ormusd and Ahrimanes and by the Egyptians upon Osiris and Typhon—at least one half of the work we have undertaken will be accomplished. Zoroastre, the reputed author of the Genesis of the Magi, thus expresses himself when speaking of the successive action of the two principles in the world : “ Ormusd, he observes, God of light and good principle, learns to Zoroastre that he has given to man a place of delights and abundance. If I had not given to my creatures that place of abundance, no other power could have given it. That place is Eiren, which at the commencement was finer than the whole world besides, and only exists by my will. Nothing can equal the beauty of that place of delights that I have given. I have acted first, and then Petiare (that is Ahrimanes, or the bad principle). That Ahrimanes full of death, makes in the waters the great serpent, mother of winter, which spreads cold in the waters, in the earth, and in the trees. In another part of the same work we find the following : “ Ahrimanes or the principle of evil and of darkness, that by which evil comes into the world, appears in the sky under the form of a great serpent, accompanied by dews or bad geniuses, carrying everywhere death and destruction.”

The above are specimens of the eastern or allegorical style of

writing—and it must be at once evident to the most superficial reader that Ormusd is but a Mythos, or personification of the principle of good, whilst Akrimanes is a personification of the principle of evil. The remark applies in like manner to the tales about Osiris and Typhon, Mithra, Hercules, Isis, Adonis, and all the deities of which we read in fabulous histories. The similarity between the tale told by Zoroastre about the garden of delights called Eiren, and that told by Moses about Eden, cannot fail to strike our readers—the *causes* of which similarity will be seen in future letters—where it will also be shewn that the most fatal, as well as the most general, of all errors have had their origin in the mistakes of the ignorant, *who could not distinguish between a poetical personification and a real existence*—which fatal mistakes the ancient priests cared not to correct. We may add, that the reason why in the one case the garden is called Eiren and in the other Eden, is that the Hebrew copyists, instead of Eiren have put Eden—which will not appear wonderful to those who know that the two letters *ר* and *ד* in the Hebrew language, are very much alike in their form. Maimonide (one of the most learned of the Jewish writers) observes, when speaking of the books of Genesis, “We ought not to take literally that which is written in the Books of the Creation, nor to have the same ideas of them as are common with the vulgar. Were it otherwise our ancient sages would not have taken so much pains to *conceal the sense*, and keep before the eyes of the uninstructed the veil of allegory which conceals the truths it contains. Taken literally, that work contains ideas of the divinity the most extravagant and absurd. Whoever can guess at the true sense of these should take care not to divulge it. It is a maxim taught us by our sages, above all, in connection with the work of the six days. It is possible that by our own intelligence, or by assistance from the lights of others, some may come at the true meaning—then they should be silent respecting it; or, if they do speak of it, they should do so obscurely, as I myself do, leaving the rest to be divined or guessed by those who have the ability to comprehend me.” It is also observed by this learned Jew, that “the love of allegory and enigma was by no means peculiar to Moses and the ancient Jewish writers, but common to all the sages of antiquity.” Philo (another Jewish writer of great reputation) held precisely the same opinions with regard to the character of the

sacred books of the Hebrews. "It is confessed by all who know anything of the Scripture, that all is there enveloped under the veil of enigma and parable," said Origen (a doctor of great reputation with the Christians) who regarded the history of Adam and Eve, the serpent, and the waters of Paradise as an allegory. St. Augustine, in his work called the "City of God," acknowledges that "all wise men agree that the adventure of Eve in plucking the fatal apple and giving it to her husband, together with the tête-à-tête said to have taken place between her and the serpent, is a mere fiction." If we compare the allegory concerning Mithra, the great divinity of the Persians, with the history of Jesus Christ, we shall be at once struck with the remarkable coincidence in all the essential particulars. Thus, Mithra, we are told, was born on the same day as Christ—and that Mithra, it is well known, was but a personification of the sun—or the great luminary which seems to be the parent or cause of life and vegetation. Mithra was called the sun, and Christ was called the light which enlightens every man coming into the world. Mithra was born in a grotto—Christ in a stable—Bacchus and Jupiter in a cave, which St. Justin has remarked. We are told that Christ reposed in a grotto, when the magi, or wise men, came to adore him. But who were these wise men? The adorers of Mithra or the sun. What presents did they carry to the rising god? Three sorts of presents consecrated to the sun by the worship of the Arabs, of the Chaldeans, and other Eastern people. By whom were they informed of his birth? By astrology, their favourite science. What were their dogmas? They believed (according to Chardin) the eternity of the first being—which is light. How are they said to occupy themselves in that fable? In fulfilling the first duty of their religion—which commanded them to worship the rising Sun. What name was given by the prophets to Christ? That of East—The East, said they, is his name. Did space permit, we might pursue the parallel,—but must content ourselves for the present in calling the attention of all Christians to such striking coincidences.

There are few, even among the most unthinking of our readers, who will not laugh at the strange remark of Firmicus (a Christian doctor) who, when vigorously attacking the ancient religions, or, as he called them, *degrading superstitions*, has taken great pains to compare the characters of Mithra and Christ—noting the traits

peculiar to each—not forgetting to dwell on the astonishing resemblance between the Persian or Mithriaque mysteries and the European or Christian mysteries,—he, however, explains this remarkable similarity between these mysteries and gods by observing (as did Tertullian and Justin) that long before any Christians existed the devil took great pleasure in copying their mysteries and ceremonies, *that were to be—so that he might enjoy a laugh at the Christians' expense!* For ourselves, who are not in the devil's secrets, (as some philosophers seem to be), we freely confess that to us it appears that the religion of Christ, borrowed from that of the ancient Persians, which was itself but the worship of the Sun, has conserved the same dogmas—the same practises—the same mysteries—or nearly so—that the accessories may have been more or less different—but the basis was precisely the same.

It is undoubtedly true that Tertullian, Firmicus, Justin, and others, call the devil to their aid in order to explain this wonderful resemblance—but as without the intervention of the devil, it is easy to perceive that when two religions resemble each other so perfectly, the most ancient is the mother, and the youngest is the daughter—it seems beyond dispute, that since the worship of Mithra is infinitely more ancient than that of Christ, and his ceremonies practised long before Christ was in existence, that the Christians are incontestably either a sect—or mere copyists of the religion of the magi or priests of Mithra—unless we are prepared to invert the order of things and prove to the satisfaction of all parties (which, perhaps, expert sophists may do) that new religions do not grow or spring out of old ones, but on the contrary, old religions spring out of new ones—but always aided by the accoucheury of the devil, who, according to the above-mentioned saints and fathers of the Christian Church, overreaches God by anticipating and making common to many nations that faith which he had intended for his chosen people. All that we insist upon is, that the most learned apologists of the Christian faith admit that the religion of Mithra had its sacraments, its baptisms, its eucharists, its consecrations by mystical words—in short, all that paraphernalia which ill-informed theologians, and their equally ill-informed disciples, have supposed were first introduced at what they term the coming of Christ!

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LETTER 3.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

“Every man is *brutish by his knowledge*; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them.”—JEREMIAH LI. 17.

We offer an unbroken chain of evidence, of which all may, if they be diligent, reach the point of suspension, to prove, as far as anything in morals can be proved, that Jesus Christ, the supposed author of the Christian faith, never had more than an ideal existence—but then, it must be born in mind, each link of this chain must be examined, or there will be a defect—a kind of chasm in our proofs—as it is clear that the evidence unexamined is *de facto* no evidence at all—the strongest reasons unsought into are but on a level with the weakest,—nay, it often happens that the advantage lies on the side of the latter, as they generally float upon the surface of things, and therefore require no effort in those who compass them. To the blind, the most beautiful productions of a Raffaele or a Carracci are in no wise preferable to the miserable daubs of a village painter—in like manner, the deepest or the shallowest reasonings are of equal worth and brightness to those afflicted with mental blindness, who are too often led (as the blind need a guide) by imposters, sacred and profane, who, in the words of our text, make them *brutish by their knowledge*.

It was fabled by ancient sages—that truth lay hid in wells, or deep pits—thereby intimating that if we would possess so bright a jewel, we must dive and search for it—and however true it may be that there is one “whose ways are past finding out,” all besides seems open to our investigation, and shame upon deluders who would hinder the right use of our reasoning faculties. Let us, then, dig for truth into the very bowels of antiquity, and draw from thence mythologic lore—that rich material, without which we cannot have a solid and lasting foundation upon which to raise the imperishable superstructure of rational opinion. The treasures that a knowledge of mythology would pour into the lap of humanity are now, as in times long past, hidden from the vulgar gaze, and like parks, pleasure-grounds, and all things else, belong only to the few. The touch of Midas, it is said, turned all things into gold—but the magic touch of the searching investigator will do more than that; for it is surely more noble, as it is infinitely more useful, to add to our stock of sound information, or rub off the rust it had accumulated by lying idle, and so to speak, give it a brightness it had not before, than to convert by the simple touch, all things into a barren metal. Some, as though possessed by the spirit of darkness, seem to pride themselves in the renunciation of reason—that most precious gift of God to man—and roll on in the mire of their own superstition until, like the swine into which we are told a legion of devils entered, they are hurried down steepes and precipices, and perish in a sea of fanaticism.

The hater of instruction must needs be a helper, if not a lover of deception—as it is manifest that all ignorance is negative deception; besides, how shall the ignorant man be guaranteed from the evils which beset him on every side? Alas! how is he to be protected from the pitfalls dug for him by the enemies of truth—more cunning than the fox and cruel than the wolf?—or how should he upon whom “the light hath not shined,” do ought but stumble in his darkness? We love not the traders in human ignorance—who, like the spotted hyæna, in silence and in darkness, seize upon their prey—but would scare them off, or make their intended victims strong enough to wrestle with and destroy them—by imparting that light which will enable them to see things as they *are*, and not as they have been told they are: having ever admired and felt the full force of the singularly expressive adage in Plutus—

Scire meum nihil est, nisi me scire hoe sciat alter.

My knowledge is nothing unless I can cause another to know what I know.

Those who have examined, in a candid spirit, the contents of our former letters, will now be in a condition to descend with us and obtain that which is to all but the bold and single-minded, a hidden treasure. The mine of intellectual wealth has been opened to the view of all—let those who have the courage proceed to explore it, which all may do with perfect safety, if guided by experience and accompanied by the inestimable safety lamp of a pure and upright conscience. The promise made to enlighten—not to deceive—unvulgarise the vulgar—shall be faithfully kept—that is, if our ability to do, keep pace with our desire to do; and above all, we shall aim at simplicity of style, so that, if possible, our observations may be within the reach of the humblest capacity—striving in this matter to imitate Plutarchus, of whom it was said by Scaliger, that “he wrote more for men of the world than men of erudition.” Nevertheless, the latter class of readers, it is humbly hoped, will have little cause to complain of our want of research—as it is by no means impossible to put much valuable learning in a very simple dress, free from that profusion of ornamental rubbish which serves only to encumber, and, as it were, hide it beneath a heap. Such abuse of language deprives the mind of its energy and suffocates judgment; and some one has happily observed, that even truths, if they deprived the mind of its elasticity, would degrade human intellect into brutish instinct. What, for example, can we learn from such pretty jargon as the following—that “God is a circle, whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere!” or the gratuitous nonsense of Albert Vieira, a Portuguese preacher, who wrote that “If the Almighty should happen to appear in a geometrical form, it would surely be the circular in preference to the triangular, the square, or the pentagonal!”

If Firmicus, and others, mentioned in our last, were in the devil’s secrets, surely this bold preacher must have had commerce with the Deity—else how should he come to know that God preferred the shape of a circle to that of a triangle, or a square?—truly such preachers are rare blasphemers. Surely, if they had such astonishing information, they should have set about writing a history of God, as Defoe did that of the devil, for the edification of all true

believers ! Synesius, a Christian bishop, in his Hymns, speaks of the Deity in the following impious manner—"Thou art a father and a mother, a male and a female ; thou art voice and silence ; thou art the fruitful nature of nature ! Thou art the father of all fathers ; and being without a father, thou art thine own father and son !! O, source of sources, principle of principles, root of roots ! thou art the unity of unities, the number of numbers ; being both unity and number !!! Thou art one and all things, one of all things, and one before all things !" This ridiculous and, to us it appears, most mischievous mode of writing, we shall carefully shun, else we might invent "most serious names to hide our ignorance" and dogmata, the hollowness of which might be covered by shewy language,—but we have yet to learn that the sublime drivel above quoted from the early Christian writers, and to which we might add a moderately sized volume, on the "transcendental qualities," "imaginative re-actions," the "vibratiuncles," "intentional species," "love spirits," and other figments or mental fungusses of modern ideologists, have done anything more than sharpen the weapons of the Atheists, who, like John Toland, laugh at the pains taken by unwary theologians to refine the Deity into a mere nothing, and exclaim—

Others, whose heads sublimer notions trace,
Cunningly prove that thou art almighty space ;
And space we're sure is nothing—*ergo*, thou ;
These men slip into the truth they know not how !

That subjects, however abstruse, about which something can be known, may, by a proper course on the part of public teachers, be made perfectly intelligible to the meanest capacity, is an opinion in which we are fortified by Moses and the prophets, in the sacred volume, and the writings of such men as Bacon, Locke, and others, among the profane ; the latter are remarkable for the clearness of their style and the modesty with which they publish their views upon all subjects—and like Moses and the prophets, insist most eloquently upon the incomprehensibility of the Deity ; as it is written that "none could look upon the face of the Lord and live." We read in Exodus, "And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt ;" but the Lord (evidently not caring to be seen) said, "Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from thy feet ; for the place whereon thou standest is

holy ground." We elsewhere find that "the Lord spake to Moses from a thick cloud;" to be sure, one reason was that the people might not hear him when he spake—but it also served as a sort of screen through which the eyes of Moses could not penetrate.

To return from this short digression, which, however, we trust will not be without its uses, as it may shew our readers the necessity there is that all who love wisdom should confine themselves to those subjects which lie within the domain of reason—beyond the boundaries of which "the wisdom of the wise is as foolishness." Nor will such limits be so hard to bear as some may be disposed to believe—for in reality, the knowledge of things is as the horizon that flies before us, and seems to mock our pursuit—keeping those who seek to grasp it in never-ceasing eternal motion. Had we all knowledge—all mental, nay physical motion would stop—none could bear the weight that *omniscience* would cast upon them; and those who desire it, like Semele, who wished that Jupiter might visit her in all the bright refulgence of his glory, would be destroyed in its fulfilment.

The fable of the Sphinx has been supposed to enclose as in a semi-transparent shell or covering, many useful hints affecting the acquirement of knowledge to those who are sufficiently sharp-sighted to penetrate beneath the surface. The Sphinx, as the ancients inform us, had the claws of a Griffin, the face of a woman, and the wings of a bird, and resided somewhere near the city Thebes, on the top of a high mountain—was noted for her cruelty in destroying all those who were unable to interpret her riddles—until Oedipus, a cunning man, induced by the hope of high reward, interpreted her famous riddle—slew, and took the monster—then placed the carcase upon a slow-paced ass,—by all of which is evidently meant what we have endeavoured to convey to the minds of our readers, that knowledge is a monster which can only be conquered by the brave and prudent, as Oedipus is represented to have been. We are moreover told, that he was lame in his feet—by which we are admonished, that all who would vanquish and overcome knowledge, must do it slowly and by degrees—not running foolishly and out of breath—but, as before observed, calmly and deliberately, as though lame in our feet—so that we may not justify the proverb—swift a-foot, slow in head. Placing the empty trunk of knowledge upon an ass—which is here meant to signify experience—also en-

closes a moral pregnant with wisdom, the substance of which we have before given—which is, that however difficult it may be to unriddle riddles, when once this is effected in the manner described, they are placed upon the back of dull experience—or, as the fable hath it—mounted on a slow-paced ass,—an illustration of which is furnished by the workings of the human mind in this our time, when men may be seen the most obstinately dull—to compare whom with the inoffensive ass, would certainly be libelling the latter—are nevertheless made by the triumphs of experience, masters of more actual knowledge than fell to the lot of many who were reputed wise among their ancestors.

The remarks in our last, touching the allegorical character of the ancient Hebrew, Pagan, and Christian writings—the parallel drawn between the character of Mithra or Persian Deity, known to be the personification of the Sun, and that of Jesus Christ, will fill pious bigots and gloomy fanatics with dismay—nay it has so filled them; and terrible are the denunciations—and awful the threatenings of the morally diseased!—but, if what we have already written has unfortunately plunged them into choler—that which we have to write will but plunge them into more choler!—as our moral physic will, we fear, only increase their distemper! We are not among those who think it wise “to do evil that good may come of it;” and surely to desert the post of truth, and cease to publish that which all should know, from fear of the tintamara of interested bigots and their stupid dupes—however good as regards ourselves—would give a mortal stab to the progress of truth and liberty. It can be no matter of astonishment to the reflecting mind that the ill-instructed among the people should be ever ready to support public persecutors in their attacks on the consciences of all who dissent from them, or that they should remain in profound ignorance as to the origin of their religion, when in matters of faith, unlike the deaf adder, they *have* heeded the voice of the charmer, charmed he never so *sillily*—nay, we know that the *charm*ers themselves—(we of course mean the priests)—know not that the Christian religion is but a branch—and a fast withering branch—of the great Upas tree of mythologic fiction; but it is with religions as with streams at which many slake their thirst—but few care to examine their source. Serapis, Isis, Anubis, Osiris, and Typhon were adored in Egypt—but all these gods were ridiculed and despised by the Romans, who

themselves adored Jupiter, Mercury, Diana, Ceres, and Pluto—that is to say, precisely the same Deities under other names. Such, it has been truly remarked, is the empire of names over the unthinking multitude, whose dogmatism upon these subjects is ever (to speak like mathematicians) as the squares of their ignorance ; and what can be more evident than if those who, born on the banks of the Tyber, thus laughed to scorn the gods of the Egyptians, had been born on the banks of the Nile, they would have held that Serepis, Isis, and the rest, were the true Deities.

In Plato we read, that at periods very remote the Greeks worshipped the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars ; but he did not seem to be aware, or have the slightest conception of what all now know, that Hercules, Apollo, Bacchus, Esculapius, &c., were but imaginary characters—like Christ—having no real existence—mere idols of the mind. We know that expressing ideas by symbols was universal throughout the ancient world. Thus—a harlot being despised by the Egyptians, was symbolized, by a creature like the Sphinx, with huge claws, the face of a woman, and the body of a beast. The famous Hercules and his twelve works will be shewn to be fictional, as Hercules was a mere personification of the power, force, and grandeur of the Sun and his supposed twelve works—the seeming motion of that luminary through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, or as they have been figuratively called, houses of the Sun. We have already called your attention to the fact that the Persian Divinity, Mithra, was but the Sun, as is shewn by ancient records. The philosopher Julian observes—“ We celebrate some days before the first day of the year with magnificent sports, in honour of the invincible God, Mithra or the Sun. May we long have the happiness to celebrate thy appearance, O Sun, king of the universe ! ” This expression is after the manner of Plato, who calls the Sun, the “ Son of God ; ” and we are informed that all the monuments raised by the Persians to their great Divinity, have these words inscribed on them “ To the God Sun, the invincible Mithra.” It is supposed even by many who have reputation for intelligence, that Hercules was a robust Greek prince, who conquered the Nemean lion, and did other wonderful things, in the same manner that many intelligent people as erroneously imagine that Christ and a cortège of twelve apostles performed certain extraordinary things eighteen hundred years ago.

Hercules was reputed among the Greeks to be the son of Alcemene, by Jupiter the father of the Gods ; this story is wonderful enough, but by no means so extraordinary as that of the Christians who maintain that the Holy Ghost was the father, whilst a virgin was the mother of Jesus Christ who, born in Judea, early in life worked at his reputed father Joseph's business, namely, carpentering and joinering.—Hercules, according to the fable, was born in Thebes, had many wives and children, and many princes of Greece put in a claim to be considered as his kinsmen—hence the Heraclides, who boasted that they were descendents from Hercules. The tomb of Hercules is also shewn in Cadiz, as that of Christ at Jerusalem, and temples, altars, solemn fetes, hymns, and sacred traditions, nourished and kept alive the delusion in the minds of the common people, whatever opinion the few who thought thereupon might have held respecting it, so that all contributed to swell a chorus in praise of the wonderful Hercules, who came upon earth to benefit the world in general, and the Greeks in particular, in the same manner that all orthodox persons in our own time lift up their voices in praise of Jesus Christ, who came to save souls in general, and those of the Jews in particular, each people believing that God has a special interest in their exclusive welfare. That the Egyptians and the Phenœcians have had the most influence upon the religions of other nations, is universally admitted, and that astronomy was the very soul of the Egyptian and Phenœcien system, is well known to those who have studied these subjects—together with the fact which my readers should carefully remember, that the Sun was their grand divinity, and called Hercules, the worship of whom extended itself from Meroe in Ethiopia (the Ethiopians were the fathers of the Egyptians) and Thebes in Upper Egypt, to the frozen regions of Scythia—from the remotest parts of India to the shores of the Atlantic—from the forests of Germany to the burning sands of Lybia. Let not the honest reader be scared by the above facts, but have *faith in truth* as the best anchor of safety—of which it has been poetically said “No tint of words can spot its snowy mantle, nor turn its sceptre into iron.” Let none fear that a Divine Religion will be unable to withstand the shock of the most eloquent sophistry—but Superstition is DEVILISH, and must be destroyed !

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 4.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

"They provoked him to jealousy with strange Gods; with abominations provoked they him to anger."—DEUT. XXXII. 16.

CHRISTIANS,

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An acute modern author has observed,* that "the ordinary stages through which any discovery in phisiology, involving views that go greatly beyond those commonly entertained, has to pass, are first, to be positively denied as false, contrary to experience, absurd, and unworthy the attention of sensible men; secondly, to be shewn to have been known and admitted before, to a degree depriving the observer who was just now ridiculed for having believed it of any credit—for having seen with more justness and originality than others, the disputed novelty; thirdly, to be denounced as a perilous innovation—endangering religion and the moral bonds of society; fourthly and finally, to be received by every body as a matter of common knowledge—the only wonder being that it was ever doubted, and its supposed anomolies and contradictions to nature's laws shewn to be, and represented by the writers of the day as, the most striking illustrations of the harmony of the physical world."

The above remarks apply with equal force to opinions in general, and need not be confined in their application to those affecting

* See accounts of some recent effects of Mesmarisim, by Herbert Mayo, F.R.S.
—MEDICAL GAZ. Nos. 31, 32, 33.

physiology in particular, as all opinions have been thus treated which tended to disturb received notions in moral as well as physical science. Who has ever attempted to pluck up the ancient tree of superstition, under the shade of which the entire human race has hitherto reposed—but has deeply felt the withering effects of the ridicule of the unscrupulous and the denunciations of those whose *craft* is in danger?—while, alas! but few have seen their opinions, however sound and healthful, take root in the human mind, and put forth fruit beyond the reach of cant and cavil! If this *has* been the case—if such the fate of opinions but moderately heterodox—what are *we* justified in expecting, who would plough up the very foundations of superstition's temple in this the most civilized portion of the globe, by proving that Jesus Christ—now worshipped as a once incarnate God, said to have been born in Judea, and crucified on Mount Calvary—never had more than an ideal existence—and that the religion which rests thereon is a desolating superstition—invented by those who “make lies their refuge.” Already have we been told that our Letters are “false and contrary to experience—totally absurd, and unworthy the attention of sensible men;” so that these opinions, in common with all others, have passed through their *first* stage. With regard to the *second*, we lay no claim to originality as respects the grand conception—but we do lay claim to originality in all that affects execution; but even this we would willingly give up, if by so doing we can give satisfaction to our opponents—not being over anxious to be thought originals—but rather desirous to be the propounders of correct opinions, caring little by whom they were *first* broached; and as to the matter of *credit*, we are not very solicitous thereupon, except inasmuch as the reputation our writings may obtain will be a kind of passport, and find them more ready acceptance with those who only read works of great repute, about which all the world talk.

Were it worth the pains we might insist with Solomon, that there is nothing new under the sun, or as a witty profane author has remarked—that “originality is but judicious imitation.” We shall, however, no farther notice this matter of originality than to say, that we agree with a writer in the “Edinburgh Review,” who observed, that “he is not so much the inventor of an opinion who first conceives and proclaims it, as he who proclaims it so loudly, so perseveringly, and so clearly, that all are compelled to hear and understand him.” We shall presently—nay we have arrived at the third stage—that is, we

are denounced as haters of truth—unbelieving Jews—perilous innovators, who wish to overthrow religion, and loosen the moral bonds of society ; but then, it has been by those who, “born as the wild ass’s colt,” are moreover, not likely to be tamed by reason and common sense, who have sagely denounced our opinions without taking the pains to read what we have written, and farther, *protest* that they will not examine anything we do write—so that if they know our opinions to be subversive of religion and morality, their knowledge must be intuitive. In this they imitate the Pharisees, who, we are told, contemptuously asked—“Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Saying in scorn, “Look and see! for out of Galilee ariseth a prophet.” *They* have passed to the silent tomb, but their spirit remains. The lapse of eighteen hundred years has made little improvement in the character of spiritual teachers. The Pharisee of to-day is the Pharisee of all time ; he is still the “whitened wall” who makes the credulity and misery of the people the ladder by which he mounts to power and fortune—blowing the trumpet of his own renown and publishing his own sanctity at the corners of our streets, as in olden time—and, as then, making all those not so hypocritical as themselves, feel their galling yoke and the sharp edge of their authority ! Priests of former ages are said to have crucified Jesus, and would willingly have crucified all those who believed in him ; now—oh strange difference!—they would willingly crucify those who do *not* believe that he, who has been called by Luciana a “crucified sophist,” was a God in human shape. Bitter, and never to be forgotten, were the persecutions suffered by the Jewish people, through ages of Christian bigotry and intolerance, because they laughed to scorn the idle, but to Christians profitable tale, that a man called Jesus Christ, whose very existence we deny, was the temporal Messiah promised by Jehovah to come in power and might to resuscitate the fallen glories of the children of Israel ! We may be taunted, despised, and rejected—Christians may still spit upon our Jewish gaberdine—they may accuse us to the judges of the land as stubborn heretics, desirous to undermine the *sacred* foundations of their *holy* faith—but in the words of the poet we may exclaim—“Oh ! father Abraham, what these Christians are ! whose own hard dealings teaches them to suspect the thoughts of others !”

Our opinion that the character of Christ is a Mythos, if founded upon the rock of truth, cannot perish, but may safely defy the waves

of error, which will dash over it in vain ; we prophecy that ere long it will be received by all as a matter of common knowledge, when this opinion will have reached its *final* stage, and the wonder will be great that *any* people upon whom God had not sent a “strong delusion that they might believe a lie,” should, for a single hour, have credited the monstrous fiction ! The stars fought against Sissera ; and surely the heavens will fight against the depravers of the human mind, and put them to flight, when it shall be known that Christ was but a personification of the Sun—and no more existed either as man or God, in divine or human shape, than Adonis, Atys, Bacchus, Osiris, or any other heathen personifications of the Sun.

It is now past doubt, that what we read about Adonis and Venus is mere fiction, as that of Osiris, Bacchus, and Atys, which in all essential particulars are precisely the same—all having no other object than to represent by a sign or symbol in human shape, the Sun’s apparent motions through the twelve signs of the zodiac ; but we shall presently prove that Hercules and his twelve works related to the Sun and the twelve signs—as we shall also shew that Christ and his twelve apostles relate to the same phenomena.

We do not deny that many men called Christ, *may* in former times, have existed in Jerusalem and elsewhere, any more than we deny that such a person or persons as Hercules once existed in Greece—but we do distinctly deny that either Christ or Hercules were gods, demi-gods, or prophets, or performed the works commonly attributed to them. Christ no more foretold the destruction of Jerusalem than did Hercules conquer the Nemean lion. Christ no more performed the miracles, Testament-makers have ascribed to him, than did Prince Hohenloe the miracles ascribed to *him* ! To destroy the divine and prophetic character of Jesus, is to destroy all that which renders him sacred in the eyes of Christians, and at once strips his character of that gaudy plumage which dazzles the eyes of his worshippers. When this *is* done, it will be time enough to consider whether one or fifty Jesus Christs walked about the streets of Jerusalem eighteen hundred years ago ; and really, of no more practical consequence than it would be to inquire whether certain men called Bacchus once lived in Thebes.

In periods very remote, the phenomena, so extraordinary to the eyes of uninstructed mortals, the rising and setting of the Sun, and its apparent motion from east to west, was alternately a subject of

the most doleful lamentations and wild rejoicings—when the god Sun was worshipped in the religious temples. Adonis is represented by the poets as lying on a superb bed by the side of the goddess of generation and of spring, the mother of love and of the graces. His adorers prepared for him flowers, essences, the first-fruits of the earth; he was invited by prayers, sometimes dolorous—sometimes full of joy, that he might be induced to remain with them; for, having personified their deity, they attributed to him feelings and passions—supposing, as ignorant devotees ever do, that the gods are much moved by human prayers, and love to be thus addressed. Before he returned to life—for, during the winter, the Sun was said to be asleep by the priests, while the god was said to be dead by the uninstructed multitude—fêtes were celebrated in honour of his resurrection. This fête, according to Corsini, was held on the 25th of March, on the 8th day before the kalends of April. The women of Argos—who, like the women everywhere, are the great supporters of superstition—went, just as we are told that Martha and Mary did to the sepulchre of Christ, to weep over the remains of Adonis; and that doleful ceremony was performed in a temple dedicated to the Saviour god, or god Lamb. The funeral of Adonis was annually celebrated at Alexandria with much pomp, when his image was carried in procession to the tomb. The like took place in Athens, if we may credit Plutarchus, who, in his *Life of Alcibiades*, informs us that upon one occasion, at the moment of the celebration of the death of Adonis, the Athenean fleet was fully equipped for the unfortunate expedition to Sicily—when nought was to be seen in the streets but the image of Adonis surrounded by a throng of women—tearing their hair, beating their breasts—playing off all those mad antics common among crazy fanatics.

Plutarchus tells us that the Egyptians thought that Hercules had his seat in the Sun, and that he sailed round the world in that star. The hymns attributed to Orpheus treat of the relation, or rather, the identity of Hercules with the Sun, by whom he is called “the god generator of time, of whom the forms are various, the father of all things, and who destroys them all. He is the god who by turns gives us the dawn and dark midnight, and runs through the career of the twelve signs; valorous Titan, thou god unrivalled and all-powerful, who destroyeth all maladies, and delivereth us from the evils which afflict us.” Bacchus, son of Semele, born in Thebes, according to the Greeks, was an ancient hero who was raised to

the rank of the gods because of his conquests ; but it is no less a fact, whatever the Greeks or Egyptians might have thought that Bacchus was not born in Thebes any more than Hercules was, or Jesus Christ in Judea, that he was not placed among the gods after his resurrection, any more than were Hercules, Adonis, Osiris, Atys, or Christ—it is no less a fact, that these personages were nothing more than personifications of the Sun. Here, however, is the difficulty—Christians will be incredulous, but let them reflect that the Romans would have believed—nay *did* believe, that the Egyptians were idolators ; and the Egyptians in like manner complimented *their* ancestors, who probably did not fail to do the same to all who in *former times* worshipped any but the *true lath and plaster divinities*,—each people being far-seeing as the vulture with regard to the superstition of their neighbours—but blind as bats and stupid as owls with respect to their own.

We know that all our readers will disclaim being superstitious—they would shrink with horror from the idea of worshipping idols, having read the command, “Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth ;” but we shall presently see, when we have proceeded a few steps further, that all Christians are idolators—that is, worshippers of symbols, or signs of things, which worship has not even the poor merit of originality. This bold assertion may startle—but the many must be startled if we desire ultimately to benefit them. Old prejudices, like old diseases, must be shaken out of the system, or the patient dies ; it is mere murder to flatter and dally with the sufferer, when by a little vigorous treatment he might be thoroughly cured,—but then, the treatment, though vigorous and firm, should not be cruel. The surgeon who finds it necessary to amputate a withered limb, should use sharp instruments, with a steady and determined hand ; but none but Tyros or bunglers will inflict unnecessary torment.

The necessity there is that human beings should be shocked, and thus aroused from their present state of stupor, will appear from a consideration of their utter helplessness as regards the fulfilment of the highest and noblest duties—a helplessness born of habit and confirmed by it, like that acquired by the animal nick-named the Sloth, by ignorant naturalists, who had only seen the creature when confined in the cages of our menageries, where its natural powers are deteriorated for the want of that healthful exercise necessary

for the developement of its energies ; but when ranging the trees of his native forests—he is *slothful* no longer ; his idleness and stupidity vanish when the restraints which produced them are removed ; nor shall we be wide of the mark in saying, that caging human beings in *theological menageries* is most destructive and pernicious to their physical and mental faculties, and moreover, as in the case of the sloth, led philosophers to make sad blunders as to the nature of man—judging him by what he was, and overlooking, or not knowing what he might become when his cage should be broken to pieces, and he permitted to breathe the pure air of Nature, and exercise those divine energies which now lie dormant within him. Men would then no longer need keepers—but gather stores of knowledge from the great garner of Nature herself—her book, the “ Elder Scripture,” would be ever open to them—which is written in a language intelligible to all, and convincing as intelligible.

Let, therefore, no sincere Christian be deterred from examining his religion, and thereby be convinced in his own mind that what he has hitherto strained to his breast as religion, is not the viper superstition, which poisons while it fascinates its victims ! We hold that the worshippers of Jesus Christ are superstitionists—mere idolaters, who have raised temples, and offered up their incense therein to a borrowed symbol—instead of using them for the purposes of knowledge and holiness. Altars are raised, and the divine worship, instead of being full of charity, peace, and affection, like the ox offered up by Prometheus to Jupiter, contains nothing more than dry bones. Thus is the worship of deity one of empty rites and barren ceremonies, with which human beings stuff out their sacrifices—leaving no room for love, peace and charity, which should be as its bowels. Nor is this the only effect which deifying idols produces—but makes sincere idolaters hate those who will not “ bow the knee to Baal.” How far the *early* Christians were infected with the spirit of idolatry, may be seen at large in the books of the holy fathers ; and never did the degenerate Jews lust after the flesh-pots of Egypt more shamefully than did the early Christians lust after the false Pagan deities ! In the Life of Gregory, surnamed Thaumaturgus,* we read that “ When Gregory saw the simple and unskilled multitude persisted in the worship of images, he granted them permission to indulge in like pleasures in celebrating the memory of the holy martyrs.” This may have been

* As quoted by Mosheim the Ecclesiastical historian, vol. 1, p. 202

politic in Gregory, but certainly speaks trumpet-tongued as to the morals and intellects of the new sect who thus went a whoring after *old* inventions—but more of this hereafter. At present, it is sufficient to know that the worship of Nature preceded the worship of idols ; the first is commonly called natural religion—having nothing whatever to do with any other revelation than that the material universe offers to the senses of man ; whereas, idolatry grew up with human error, and is an abomination in the sight of the Lord, as appears in Scripture, where we are told—“ Jehovah, he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath—*there is none else !*”

Few will believe that men in any age worshipped blocks of stone *as* blocks of stone ; but it is evident the word god, having no prototype in nature, philosophers took refuge in their own conceptions, which being more or less grand and imposing, were put into shape by the chisel of the sculptor, hence signs, emblems, or, as they are generally termed, symbols ; which latter word we shall hereafter use as being the most expressive ; the full and true meaning will, we trust, soon fall within the comprehension of the dullest. We *did* intend to have entered at large into a consideration of the word *Symbol* ; but such a course would too far distract the attention of our readers from the great question we have pledged ourselves to consider ; but as it is indispensable that all should have a correct idea of symbolic worship fully before them, we have determined to publish a SUPPLEMENT with our fifth Letter, containing the great Lord Bacon's curious, and truly extraordinary explanation of PAN, or, as the name imports, UNIVERSAL NATURE ! We cannot too highly recommend this singular performance to all those who would fully understand in what consists the essence of physical mythology. To the *unlettered*, we recommend it as a simple explanation of what a symbol is, which in no way else can they so well comprehend. To the *philosophic* we recommend it as a key with which to open the great store-house of ancient wisdom—a performance at once simple and sublime, containing the most profound reflections and speculations touching the nature of man and the origin of the universe. We may add, that in no other of his works did that great philosopher, publish his sentiments so unreservedly and so fully as when explaining and enlarging on ancient fable.

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SUPPLEMENT.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

THE FABLE OF PAN.

The ancients have with great exactness, delineated Universal Nature, under the person of Pan. They leave his origin doubtful : some asserting him the son of Mercury—and others the common offspring of all Penelope's suitors. The latter supposition doubtless occasioned some later writers to entitle this ancient fable "Penelope;" a thing frequently practised, when the earlier relations are applied to more modern characters and persons; though sometimes with great absurdity and ignorance; as in the present case: for Pan was one of the ancientest gods, and long before the time of Ulysses; besides, Penelope was venerated by antiquity for her maternal chastity. A third sort will have him the issue of Jupiter and Hybris—that is reproach. But whatever his origin was, the Destinies are allowed his sisters.

He is described by antiquity with pyramidal horns, reaching up to heaven, a rough and shaggy body, a very long beard, of a biform figure, human above, half brute below, ending in goat's feet. His arms, or ensigns of power, are—a pipe in his left hand, composed of seven reeds; in his right a crook; and he wore for his mantle a leopard's skin.

His attributes and titles were—the god of hunters, shepherds, and all the rural inhabitants; president of the mountains; and after Mercury the next Messenger of the gods. He was also held

the leader and ruler of the nymphs, who continually danced and frisked about him, attended with the Satyrs, and their elders the Sileni. He had also the power of striking terrors, especially such as were vain and superstitious: whence they came to be called panic terrors.

Few actions are recorded of him, only a principal one is, that he challenged Cupid at wrestling, and was worsted. He also caught the giant Typhon in a net, and held him fast. They relate farther of him, that when Ceres growing disconsolate for the rape of Proserpine, hid herself, and all the gods took the utmost pains to find her, by going out different ways for that purpose—Pan only had the good fortune to meet her, as he was hunting, and discovered her to the rest. He likewise had the assurance to rival Apollo in music—and in the judgment of Midas was preferred; but the judge had, though with great privacy and secrecy, a pair of asses ears fastened on him for his sentence.

There is very little said of his amours; which may seem strange among such a multitude of gods, so profusely amorous. He is only reported to have been very fond of Echo, who was also esteemed his wife—and one nymph more, called Syrinx, with the love of whom Cupid inflamed him for his insolent challenge.

Lastly, Pan had no descendant; which also is a wonder, when the male gods were so extremely prolific; only he was the reputed father of a servant girl, called Iambe, who used to divert strangers with her ridiculous prattling stories.

This fable is perhaps the noblest of all antiquity; and pregnant with the mysteries and secrets of nature. Pan, as the name imports, represents the Universe, about whose origin there are two opinions, viz.—that it either sprung from Mercury—that is, the divine word, according to the Scriptures and philosophical divines; or from the confused seeds of things. For they who allow only one beginning of all things, either ascribe it to God, or if they suppose a material beginning, acknowledge it to be various in its powers; so that the whole dispute comes to these two points, viz.—either that Nature proceeds from Mercury, or from confused mixture, according to the fable.

The third origin of Pan seems borrowed by the Greeks from the Hebrew mysteries, either by means of the Egyptians, or otherwise; for it relates to the state of the world—not in its first creation, but

as made subject to death and corruption after the fall ; and in this state it was, and remains the offspring of God and sin, or Jupiter and reproach. And therefore these three several accounts of Pan's birth may seem true, if duly distinguished in respect of things and times. For this Pan, or the universal nature of things, which we view and contemplate, had its origin from the divine word, and confused matter, first created by God himself ; with the subsequent introduction of sin, and consequently corruption.

The destinies, or the natures and fates of things, are justly made Pan's sisters—as the chain of natural causes links together the rise, duration, and corruption—the exaltation, degeneration, and workings—the processes, the effects, and changes of all that can any way happen to things.

Horns are given him, broad at the roots, but narrow and sharp a-top, because the nature of all things seem pyramidal : for individuals are infinite ; but being collected into a variety of species, they rise up into kinds ; and these again ascend, and are contracted into generals,—till at length nature may seem collected to a point. And no wonder if Pan's horns reach to the heavens, since the sublimities of nature, or abstract ideas, reach in a manner to things divine : for there is a short and ready passage from metaphysics to natural theology.

Pan's body, or the body of nature, is, with great propriety and elegance, painted shaggy and hairy—as representing the rays of things ; for rays are as the hair, or fleece of nature, and more or less worn by all bodies. This evidently appears in vision, and in all effects or operations at a distance—for whatever operates thus may be properly said to emit rays. But particularly the beard of Pan is exceedingly long ; because the rays of the celestial bodies penetrate and act to a prodigious distance—and the Sun himself, when clouded on its upper part, appears to the eye bearded.

Again, the body of nature is justly described as biform, because of the difference between its superior parts ; as the former, for their beauty, regularity of motion, and influence over the earth, may be properly represented by the human figure ; and the latter, because of their disorder, irregularity, and subjection to the celestial bodies, are by the brutal. This biform figure also represents the participation of one species with another ; for there appear to be no simple natures ; but all participate or consist of two : thus man has

somewhat of the brute—the brute somewhat of the plant—the plant somewhat of the mineral ; so that all natural bodies have really two faces—or consist of a superior and an inferior species.

There lies a curious allegory in the making of Pan goat-footed ; on account of the motion of ascent which the terrestrial bodies have towards the air and heavens : for the goat is a clambering creature, that delights in climbing up rocks and precipices : and in the same manner, the matters destined to this lower globe strongly affect to rise upwards ; as appears from the clouds and meteors.

Pan's arms, or the ensigns he bears in his hands, are of two kinds ; the one an emblem of harmony, the other of empire. His pipe, composed of seven reeds, plainly denotes the consent and harmony, or the concords and discord of things, produced by the motion of the seven planets. His crook also contains a fine representation of the ways of nature ; which are partly strait, and partly crooked ; thus the staff having an extraordinary bend towards the top, denotes, that the works of divine Providence are generally brought about by remote means, or in a circuit ; as if somewhat else were intended, rather than the effect produced, as in the sending of Joseph into Egypt, &c. So likewise in human government, they who sit at the helm, manage and wind the people more successfully, by pretext and oblique courses, than they could by such as are direct and strait ; so that in effect all sceptres are crooked a-top.

Pan's pipe, composed of seven reeds, leads to curious reflections, as the number seven is a mystical number, like the number twelve, and three-hundred-and-sixty-five, or that of the days of the year. In the apocalypse of St. John we find that the numbers seven and twelve are repeated at almost every page,—the first is mentioned fourteen and the second twenty-four times. The chandelier with seven branches, which we are told represented the planetary system, is the Temple of Jerusalem ; the seven doors of the cave of Mithra, or the Sun, the seven stages of the tower of Babylon, surmounted by an eighth, which represented the sky, and served as a temple to Jupiter ; the seven gates of the tower of Thebes, each carrying the name of a planet ; the lyre with seven strings, touched by Apollo, or by the god Sun ; the book of destiny, composed of seven tablets ; the seven prophetic seals of the Brahmins, on each of which is marked the name of a planet ; the seven consecrated stones to the same planets in Laconia ; the division into seven

castes adopted by the Indians and Egyptians from the highest antiquity ; the seven idols that the Bonzes carry every year in great pomp to the seven temples ; the seven mystical vowels which formed the sacred formula in the temple of the planets ; the seven altars of the monument of Mithra ; the seven great geniuses invoked by the Persians ; the seven archangels of the Jews and the Chaldeans ; the seven resounding towers of the ancient Byzance ; the seventh day with all people, or the period of seven days, each consecrated to a planet ; the period of seven times seven with the Jews ; the seven sacraments with the Christians, &c. &c.

Pan's mantle, or clothing, is with great ingenuity made of a leopard's skin ; because of the spots it has : for, in like manner, the heavens are sprinkled with stars, the sea with islands, the earth with flowers, and almost each particular thing is variegated, or wears a mottled coat.

The office of Pan could not be more lively expressed, than by making him the god of hunters : for every natural action, every motion and process, is no other than a chase : thus arts and sciences hunt out their works ; and human schemes and counsels, their several ends ; and all living creatures either hunt out their aliment, pursue their prey, or seek their pleasures ; and this in a skilful and sagacious manner. He is also stiled the God of the rural inhabitants ; because men in this situation live more according to nature, than they do in cities and courts ; which corrupt them with effeminate arts. He is likewise particularly stiled President of the mountains, because in mountains and lofty places, the nature of things lies more open and exposed to the eye and the understanding.

In his being called the messenger of the gods, next after Mercury, lies a divine allegory ; as, next after the word of God, the image of the world is the herald of the divine power and wisdom ; according to the expression of the Psalmist : " The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-works."

Pan is delighted with the company of the nymphs ; that is, the souls of all living creatures are the delight of the world ; and he is properly called their governor, because each of them follows its own nature as a leader ; and all dance about their own respective rings, with infinite variety, and never-ceasing motion. And with these continually join the Satyrs and Sileni, that is, Youth and Age ; for all things have a kind of young, cheerful, and dancing time ; and

again their time of slowness, tottering, and creeping. And whoever in a true light considers the notions and endeavours of both these ages, like another Democritus, will perhaps find them as odd and strange, as the gesticulations and antic motions of the Satyrs and Sileni.

The power he had of striking terrors, contains a very sensible doctrine; for nature has implanted fear in all living creatures; as well to keep them from risking their lives, as to guard against injuries and violence: and yet this nature, or passion keeps not its bounds; but with just and profitable fears always mixes such as are vain and senseless; so that all things, if we could see the insides, would appear full of panic terrors. Thus mankind, particularly the vulgar, labour under a high degree of superstition; which is nothing more than a panic dread that principally reigns in unsettled and troublesome times.

The presumption of Pan, in challenging Cupid to the conflict, denotes that matter has an appetite, and tendency to a dissolution of the world, and falling back to its first chaos again; unless this depravity and inclination were restrained and subdued by a more powerful concord and agreement of things, properly expressed by love or Cupid: it is therefore well for mankind, and the state of all things, that Pan was thrown and conquered in the struggle.

His catching and detaining Typhon in the net, requires a similar explanation; for whatever vast and unusual swells, which the word Typhon signifies, may sometimes be raised in nature, as in the sea, the clouds, the earth, or the like; yet nature catches, entangles, and holds all such outrages and insurrections in her inextricable net, wove as it were of adamant.

That part of the fable, which attributes the discovery of lost Ceres to Pan, whilst he was hunting; a happiness denied the other gods, though they diligently and expressly sought her, contains an exceeding just and prudent admonition, viz.—that we are not to expect the discovery of things useful in common life, as that of corn denoted by Ceres, from abstract philosophies; as if these were the gods of the first order; no, not though you used your utmost endeavours this way; but only from Pan, that is a sagacious experience and general knowledge of nature; which is often found, even by accident, to stumble upon such discoveries, whilst the pursuit was directed another way.

The event of his contending with Apollo in music, affords us an useful instruction, that may help to humble the human reason and judgment, which is too apt to boast, and glory in itself. There seems to be two kinds of harmony ; the one of divine Providence, the other of human reason : but the government of the world, the administration of its affairs, and the more secret divine judgments, sound harsh and dissonant to human ears, or human judgment ; and though this ignorance be justly rewarded with asses ears ; yet they are put on and wore, not openly, but with great secrecy : nor is the deformity of the thing seen or observed by the vulgar.

We must not find it strange if no amours are related of Pan besides his marriage with Echo : for nature enjoys itself, and in itself all other thing ; he that loves, desires enjoyment ; but in profusion there is no room for desire : and therefore Pan, remaining content with himself, has no passion, unless it be for discourse, which is well shadowed out by Echo, or talk ; or when it is more accurate, by Syrinx, or writing. But Echo makes a most excellent wife for Pan, as being no other than genuine philosophy, which faithfully repeats his words : or only transcribes exactly as nature dictates ; thus representing the true image and reflection of the world, without adding a tittle.

Philosophers who speak doubtingly of things are much abused and derided by those who hold a more certain creed ; but surely to say, as some have said, that we know nothing—one thing is not more certain than another—is far better than to erect our own conceits into oracles, making our faith the standard by which we measure that of other men, when it is manifest that minds like bodies vary as regards strength and fitness, and when again we reflect that about things heavenly there hangs a mystery—a thick mist, which has hitherto clouded the intellects of the most far-seeing of mortals. The world seems given over to our disputes—but did men know all things they would dispute no longer ; the heavens teach not their own cause—merely their own existence ; and though some may know by revelation the nature of divine things, it is in a sense totally distinct from that now in vogue ; for the heavens merely display a character of perpetuity and unchangeableness, which contrasts admirably with the ceaseless motion and and strugglings and changes of matter on our own planet ; but whether we cast our eyes towards the stars, or down upon the earth,

it should be with a view, not merely to gape and wonder, but if possible, to grasp and enclose, as in a net, all that it displays ; but this has not yet been accomplished by men. Had philosophy done its duty in times past, and not crept timidly along, as dreading the sound of its own footsteps, God would have been glorified by the mind of man, and philosophies would no longer be as a stage play got up for vain shew, and exposed as at a fair, to the highest bidder ; but become next to religion, the divinest thing ; for religion is to the imagination of man, what philosophy is to the judgment ; that is, imagination when it thwarts not judgment, but merely leads the way to things unknown, meddling not with those of earth, except in harmony with judgment, which should be the prime disposer of mortal bliss, and sit enthroned as the supreme arbiter of human destiny. Whereas with the puffed-up and swollen superstitionist, the reverse holds, for he applies his judgment to that it fitteth not, making use of his imagination when the matter lieth beneath his feet, this is mere vanity, and those so acting are generally men of small capacity but large assurance.

It tends also to the support and perfection of Pan or nature, to be without offspring ; for the world generates in its parts, and not in the way of a whole ; as wanting a body external to itself, wherewith to generate.

Lastly, for the supposed or spurious prattling daughter of Pan, it is an excellent addition to the fable, and aptly represents the talkative philosophies that have at all times been stirring, and filled the world with idle tales : being ever barren, empty, and servile ; though sometimes indeed diverting and entertaining ; and sometimes again, troublesome and importunate.

We may add—Pan was with the Egyptians what Vishnow seemed to be with the ancient inhabitants of the vast continent of India, as we read in their sacred books—that the Universe is nothing more than the form of Vishnow—that he carries it in his bosom, that he is all that is, all that was, all that will be—that he is the principle and end of all things, that he is all in all, that he is a being who displays himself to our eyes under millions of different forms.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 5. WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

"And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you."—LEVITICUS. XXVI. 30.

CHRISTIANS,

To prove by abstract reasoning that the worship of Christ is a borrowed worship—and, moreover, the worship of an idol, would be difficult, if not impossible. The majority of readers are, we fear, not yet prepared to deal with abstractions—but of historic evidence all may judge. Mere reasoning, however just, will not enable us to effect the object we have in view. Idleness, physical and mental, is the radical vice of the human constitution, and leads us to rest content with what we have, rather than exert our energies to obtain that we ought to have. To arouse, therefore, sluggish minds, much evidence is necessary—and this too, of a clear and simple character, so that its results may be perceived at a glance, and our readers stimulated to inquiry by the interesting thoughts such evidence suggests. We rely, therefore, *principally* upon historic testimony to bear us out in our assertion—that the Christian religion was borrowed from ancient religions, and was originally a mere solar fable.

Many Infidels, who have not hesitated even to doubt the existence of one eternal God, have nevertheless admitted that a man called Christ once played a certain part in Palestine, and was the founder of the religion bearing his name. These men appeal to reason; and as they profess to be guided by no other authority, they must, if consistent, abide by its decision. "Hast thou appealed unto reason? unto reason shalt thou go"—at that severe tribunal their opinions must be judged—received if sound, and rejected if erroneous.

That the unthinking multitude should have held so erroneous an opinion through many ages, is by no means wonderful, as from the cradle to the grave they hear the one falsehood hourly reiterated; and such is the nature of the human mind, and so susceptible is it to the influences, whether of truth or fiction, that the veriest absurdity, oft repeated, is an absurdity no longer, but a serious truth, as observed by Addison—"tell a man anything, however absurd, every morning before breakfast, and depend upon it, he will believe you in the long run;" and what other tale have Christians been allowed to hear since Christianity wedded itself to the civil form, and became part and parcel of the ever-varying law of the land, than that Jesus Christ did this, and Jesus Christ did the other, some eighteen hundred years ago? which, moreover, all were told that, not to believe, was to inherit damnation! Nor are the injurious effects of error confined to the taught—but speedily effect the teachers thereof, as it is by no means seldom that expounders of falsehood begin by deceiving, and end by being deceived; error being by its very nature contaminating, like pitch or glue, adhering to those who handle it; hence we find that where superstition prevails—(and where does it not?)—both priests and people are more or less the victims of their own arts; and few even among the more cunning, entirely escape the moral infection—whereas, the many are inevitably destroyed by it. "Thou canst not touch pitch without being defiled," saith the Scripture.

Sceptics who support their opinion that Christ did not exist as a god, but merely as a reformer, as did Zoroastre, Minos, Moses and others, make great parade of historic proof, which, they contend, shews that it is at all events *probable* that such a character actually existed; but reject the idle tale about his birth, resurrection

from the dead, &c. Nor is it uncommon to hear them treating, in their public discourses, what they are pleased to call the precepts, doctrines, and life of Jesus Christ; and though we may be justified in supposing that not a few of such Sceptics make a shield of the name of Christ, with a view to back up their own weakness and ward off public odium, and thus call the attention of simpletons from their real designs and ultimate objects, yet we cannot doubt that some few of these men are sincere, and really do suppose (being very ill read in the matter) that what is said in the Testamental books is something more than an old wife's fable, made up of the rakings and serapings of worn out philosophies.

Oh, say these oracles, to disbelieve in the existence of Jesus Christ, is to produce a moral earthquake, and throw into the air the very foundations of history—not to believe what the apostles have said, is to shake our belief in the sayings of Plato and Aristotle, or the doings of an Alexander. This is the same in substance as was formerly said by the brother of Cicero, who declared that to deny the truth of the oracles of Delphi, would be to overthrow the foundations of all history; but there are few Christians who will admit, that by attacking these pretended oracles, they would not rather be strengthening the foundations of history; but so it is, each defends his own chimera, and leaves history and science to shift for themselves.

When we demonstrate to our readers that the incarnation of Christ is that of the Sun—that what is said of his death and resurrection relate entirely to that brilliant luminary, and that all calling themselves Christians are merely worshippers of the Sun, as the Peruvians that they so cruelly slaughtered, the great question, to wit—whether a man called Christ did or did not exist, shall be freely and fully discussed. If it be demanded whether we consider that the object of the Christian worship was a real being, or merely ideal?—we reply, that it was certainly real, inasmuch as nothing can be real, if the Sun is not so,—that brilliant star which enlightens every man coming into the world.

If we search for evidence of the existence of Christ, whether as philosopher or impostor, in the writings of the Pagan authors, we shall find that none of them—at least those of them whose works have floated down to us like light planks upon the waves of time—have

treated *ex professo* that question, or given a history of Christ ; but great stress has been laid upon the observations of Tacitus, in his Annals—" that the Christians derived their name and origin from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death by the sentence of the Procurator Pontius Pilate ;" but what do these words amount to, when it is evident that they are used by Tacitus to give the etymology of the word Christian ? which he informs his readers, came from one Christ, put to death under Pilate ; and this too, happened somewhere about a hundred years after Christ is said to have existed—that is, Tacitus relates a legend about that time, and we shall hereafter see that the legend was a solar fiction.

If Tacitus had spoken of Bramins, he would doubtless have said that they derived their name from a certain Brama who had lived in India ; nor would the present Bramins be slow to avail themselves of such historic testimony in their favour ; and yet none but silly believers in Brama would, on that account, think it *proved* that the god came on earth in human shape, especially if they knew that the term Brama is but a name for one of the three attributes of a personified divinity.

It is clear that Tacitus, having, in his history of Nero, to give an account of the Christian sect, gives to the name the received etymology, without troubling himself to inquire whether a man or a god really existed, or if he was the hero of a sacred legend, such an examination would have been quite out of place in his work. Suetonius, another author of repute, when speaking of the Jews, states that " there was much agitation among them during the time of Claudius, and that they were moved and incited by a certain Christ—a turbulent seditious man, who was the cause of the expulsion of the Jews from Rome." It would puzzle even orthodox Christians, which of these two historians to believe, seeing that they contradict each other, or at all events, do not accord as to the time and place *where* and *when* the pretended Christ lived ; but the righteousness of faith will enable its professors to remove mountains, so that, perhaps, they will find little difficulty in believing both these accounts. The Christians generally, however, seem to prefer Tacitus, and he certainly the most accords with the solar fable.

Nothing can be more clear than this—that the above-quoted historians have spoken of Christ upon vague rumour, without attach-

ing any importance to the tale, and therefore, their testimony by no means offers a safe satisfactory guarantee of the existence of Christ, whether as god, legislator, or impostor. If that existence had been an indubitable fact, it is hardly credible that from the times of Tertullian, authors who had seriously discussed the question and examined the origin of Christianity, should have written that the worship of the Christians was that of the Sun, and by no means connected with a man who had formerly existed. Those persons who pretend to the character of philosophers, and make of Christ a reformer, or an impostor, only display their ignorance of ancient history, and are brought to such an erroneous conclusion because they have not enough of faith to believe in Christ as a god; and on the other hand, not had an opportunity to compare his fabulous history with the solar legend; hence they do not see in his character what it really is—a sacerdotal fiction.

Those who cannot admit as authentic history, the famed exploits of Hercules, nor see in him a god, have concluded that he was a great prince, the history of whom has been embellished by the marvellous. Such an explanation certainly has the advantage of simplicity in its favour—and is, moreover, a quick and ready method of getting rid of a subject that its examiners have not had the resolution and patience thoroughly to probe and search into; but, unfortunately, it does not give us true results; and though such explanations are duly received as genuine, Hercules is no less the Sun personified. But when an error is once established, and considered respectable in the eyes of the people—when spiritual pastors prohibit any but orthodox criticisms—when they make books and destroy them, proving some divine and others heterodox—there is little chance that the people should be in a condition to get correct knowledge therefrom.

If there are ages of light for philosophers—that is to say, for a small number of men,—all ages are ages of darkness for the millions—especially in matters which affect religion; nor shall we be wide of the true mark, if we judge of the credulity of the people by the impudence of the authors of the first legends. If we are to believe them, they were eye-witnesses—they saw what they relate. We are told that the authors of the Christian books were plain and simple men: however this may be, one thing is certain—that the

trashy stories they have told are fit only for idiots or children—differing only from Tom Thumb, Little Red Ridinghood, and the like, in being incalculably more mischievous, and far less amusing. The legend is indeed sufficiently simple,—no one can justly deny that the apostles were simple men—but still men so simple as to believe every thing, or to say that they have seen, when it was quite impossible they ever could have seen,—are surely but bad authorities to rely upon in the building up of our faith. Besides, these writings carry upon the face of them, not to be mistaken signs of imposture. One of them, after having written as nearly as possible the same that is to be found in the books of the other three, says that the hero of his legend had performed such a crowd of miracles, that if a book containing them all could, by any possibility, be made, the universe would be unable to contain it! The hyperbole is rather strong; but how is it possible that, of such a sum of miracles, none have been related to us, save those contained in the four Evangelists, who all confine themselves within the same, or nearly the same, circle of facts. Truly the manufacturers of these books were simple workmen, or they would have managed matters better; but no, out of the more than can be counted of miracles and facts, they have all related the same, or nearly the same, circumstances, with a difference so trifling, that if the four had clapped their simple heads together with a short-sighted intention to cheat the people, they could not have succeeded better. What! out of so many millions of remarkable events, the four *evangelicals* agree to write only about the same facts!—all the rest are consigned to oblivion—traditions as well as sacred writings are dumb!

The author of the legend known under the name of St. John, whether simple or sage, has undoubtedly reckoned upon having none but true-believers for readers—that is, simpletons. Indeed, to admit the testimony of these books as proofs of the existence of Christ, is to believe everything; for if they write truly when they say that Christ lived among them, what possible reason should we have for believing that he lived among them, as they have related he did—especially when we further consider what an abandoned and scandalously impudent band of imposters early Christian writers were—how filled to the brim with fanaticism and intolerance? One Sant Denis attests, that himself and the sophist Apo-

lophane, were at Heliopolis, or the town of the Sun, when he saw an eclipse of the Sun when the moon was at full!—that is contrary to the nature of things,—and that the eclipse happened at the death of Christ, or the Sun! He affirms that he distinctly saw the moon place itself under the Sun, where it remained three hours, and when satisfied with its visit, travelled back again to the east, or point of opposition, where it should have been fourteen days after!

When such trashy stuff as this is fabricated, and a market found for it, it is a pretty good proof that there are a number of simpletons ready to purchase such folly; and from our experience of human nature, we are warranted in saying—that where fools are, there will *knaves* be—“where carcasses are, there will eagles be gathered together.”

Printing has been called the art preservative of all others; four centuries have elapsed since men received so valuable an auxiliary in the acquisition of knowledge,—but even now we may only print that which is orthodox, and deemed right and true by ghost-seers who hold the power of the state. Those who write in defiance of the phantom orthodoxy, must do it at some risk; but when the press shall be free, and men permitted to speak and write all they think and know, it is impossible that the Christian superstition can maintain its ground. Christian preachers dread inquiry, because inquiry must sooner or later destroy error. What people, aided by a free press and illumined by knowledge, could believe the ridiculous fictions above related, or the miracles said to have been performed by Christ and his disciples? Who, save a wretched fanatic, would pride himself upon the abandonment of reason, or have faith in idle tales that even well-instructed children laugh at, and despise? Pope Leo X. is reported to have said—“This fable of Christ maketh us rich.” Aye, truly does it! and if the divinity of a religion is best proved by the fatness of those who teach, and the leanness of the taught—if the luxury of the dupers, and the squalid wretchedness of the duped, prove that a religion is of God, then is Christianity of God.

The prodigies said to have been performed by Simon the magician, and the full faith the people seemed to have in that tissue of imposture, shews clearly that in those times the people believed all they were told to believe. If we read with attention the mar-

tyrology of the three first centuries, and the history of the miracles of Christianity, we shall have good cause to crimson with shame, that by imposture on the one hand, and blind credulity on the other, the human race should have been so foully dishonored!—and is it upon such a basis that any will now have the boldness to support the existence and history of a god, or man divine, of whom no writer of sense—no writer strange to his sect—has spoken—in times too when his miracles, had they been performed, would have astonished the Universe!—when we are actually compelled to search in a book written a hundred years after by Tacitus, a Pagan historian, for the etymology of the word Christian, in order to prove the existence of Christ; or, to interpret by a pious fraud a passage in Josephus, long since known to have been an interpolation?

When we shall have sufficiently explained the legend—when we shall have shewn that its authors have collected different marvellous fictions, which lay scattered up and down in the works of the adorers of the Sun—that Atys, Adonis, Hercules, and Christ, were only different names for the same personification, and nothing more than the Sun, worshipped under different names—when we shall have compared their characters, the points in which they agree, noting at the same time any disagreements, and trace them to their causes, the fallacy of relying upon bold lying records of spiritual imposters, in opposition to such a mass of proofs, will at once appear ridiculous and vain. To explain the fable of the death and resurrection of Christ, by collecting and bringing under one head, legends of different religions, which, born in the East, have been propogated in the West about the time of the first Christians, will be the first great division of our subject. Should we be successful thus far, and prove beyond the reach of cavil, that the theology of the Christians is founded upon the same basis as that of the Indians, the Egyptians, and the Greeks, we shall then enter more at large upon the second grand division of the subject, which we have simply touched upon in this Letter, with a view to remove some misconceptions that many of our readers, we are told, have fallen into.

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LETTER 6.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

"And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them."—2 KINGS X. 26.

CHRISTIANS,

It seems reasonable to suppose that human beings observed the operations of matter upon matter—the action and re-action of the particles of the universe, long ere they had the power by abstraction to arrive at a conception, however rude, of Deity. They adored the world they *saw*, before they had any distinct idea of a Creator they did *not* see; the worship, therefore, of the Universe and its parts, seemed to have preceded, nay, it is past doubt, was the origin or root of all others—giving birth to certain religious sentiments, when men were rude, uncivilized, or in what is commonly, though erroneously, understood by the terms, natural state; such religion was called natural religion.

The turf was then men's fragrant shrine,
Their temple, Lord, that arch of thine;
Their censor's breath the mountain air,
And silent thoughts their only prayer.

Of all the phenomena which bewildered and astonished the half-savage beholder, none could have been so suggestive and inspiring as the machinery of the heavens,—the secret springs of which, baffle the ingenuity of the curious, and are an eternal record of

human ignorance : for if the heavens declare the glory of God—they equally publish the ignorance of man, who has gazed till his sight aches at them ; but while feeding his eyes, his understanding hath not been fed ; and if men have conceived of the causes of these wonders, they have done so at the expense of the Deity—inasmuch as presumptuous philosophers have degraded God by reducing him to the level of their own conceptions—instead of elevating their conceptions up to God !

To see the minutest insect made sensible to sight by the microscope, is to behold a wonder ; but what words can describe the mingled feelings of awe and delight, which seem as struggling for mastery in the mind of the true man, when he sees the morning Star of day, as it seems to rise majestically in the east—dissipating the shadows of night—sailing above the horizon—infusing joy and life and gladness by its presence—heralding in the day, and arousing Nature herself from her drowsiness ! Who, not hooped about by a heart-chilling stoicism, corrupted by affectation, or degraded by fanaticism, but must feel a thrill of ecstasy, and long to know how such things can be ! Great is the vanity of that man who struggles to free himself from the shackles which bind his body and soul, though in his efforts to do so, they eat into his flesh, making him suffer the torments fabled of the damned ! Vain are all strugglings against the nature of things—which is one and eternal—giving birth to folly and its hideous train of falsehood, treachery, racking doubts and fears—making the garden earth a thorny wilderness !

Darkness to the mentally blind, was and is a mystery ; the witching time of night was a time of terrors to the uninitiated into the causes thereof,—for the phenomena we know not the cause of, we instinctively fear ; hence the science of causation is that which would tend more than ought else to disabuse us of vain alarms,—as wise men fear no darkness, save that of ignorance, but rather woo and love it, when they would enjoy negative bliss, “the balm of hurt minds,” compose themselves to sleep, and shut out for a season the remembrance of their toils and anxieties. If, to the superstitious, darkness and dread came hand in hand, like twin fiends, light must have been welcomed as the harbinger of exceeding joy ; and the Sun being the never-failing source of light and heat, which is the principle of life, how can we wonder that the splendid luminary should have been hailed as a deliverer !—chanted by the poets as the generator and preserver of all things, and by the common people

as a living god—eternally occupied in combating with and chasing away the spirits of evil or darkness—those destructive foes of the human race!

The Sun neither rises nor sets in reality—nor does it move from east to west, but merely *appears* to do so. No! the Sun is ever the same, and like to itself; to our eyes, it carries an air of perpetuity and unchangeableness—seeming to bear upon it the seal of eternity! Our first fathers have not seen its beginning—our remotest posterity will not see its end! Were it annihilated, or did its rays no longer penetrate, as now they do, the very innermost recesses of matter, all would be a stiffened heap—without form, and void! Generations rise from the earth—strut and fret their hour upon the stage of human affairs, and pass again to that earth from whence they sprang. Thus does matter, the common mother of all—most unnaturally, as to some it seems—devour her own offspring. We are born and die; scarcely are we born—hardly do we spring from the common womb, than we return to it all entire; and when decomposed, our bodies' wreck furnishes material for new existences!—and so short is the span of mortal bliss, or woe—so quickly does death tread upon the heels of life—that the wonder only is, that men should not long since have shaken off fear, and learned to endure the grim monster, which “must come when it will come.” But if death be the common lot of all that is on earth—not so with heavenly things, which give no indication of progress or decay, improvement or deterioration. The Sun seems as bright—grand—imposing now, as in any former times!—redolent of beauty, strength, and majesty!—that to the imaginative and ardent mind it may to-day appear as to the first mortals who beheld its lustre, and were dazzled by its brightness!—the fiery-chariot of an Eternal God, who chaseth before him through the etherial vault, the demons of night and of evil!

The basis of all natural religion is, and ever was, the Universe, or great whole, which in former ages, was worshipped as one being made up of many parts, under names and forms innumerable; and not, as now, considered as distinct from the Deity. To suppose a Deity distinct from the Universe, capable of creating it, was an effort of the mind which, as before noted, benighted heathens were not equal to; accordingly, we find that the worship of the material world was the *first* worship, which, however unreasonable and absurd, was of a tangible character; and though injurious, was but nega-

tively so ; for the insufficiency of human reason to comprehend by any kind of abstraction the attributes of Deity, makes men fly for refuge to revelation ; but then, the heathens had no revelation, general or special, save that which Nature herself gives to all : but Nature's revelation teaches not the existence of a God, but rather leads the mind to a Pantheistical philosophy, which is a philosophy that in fact, shuts out all, save matter and motion, from the world, No ; if we desire a proof of God's existence, we must seek it in the Scripture, where we read that God, by the mouth of Moses, said unto the Children of Israel, " And I will take you to me for a people ; and I will be to you a God ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

If in this our day science is in its cradle, and rocked by superstition—if philosophers with all their boasted knowledge, are ignorant—whether heat be itself a substance, a subtle fluid, or merely a condition of substances—if none, however learned, can teach us the precise nature of the brilliant Star which seems to be the parent of life and vegetation—if we are ignorant whether the Sun is a ball of flame, or as thought by Anaxagorus, a huge red hot stone, or as others, that it is an opaque body, more or less dense, surrounded by an atmosphere of a brilliant and luminous appearance, the grand source of heat and light, or as the heathens supposed, and millions now believe, that it is the seat or residence of intelligent deities—it will be perhaps wise in us to hazard no conjectures upon the subject, which would be but adding one more to the million and one idle theories which have been ventured thereon, proving little else but the ingenuity of those who use them. No ; it is rather our duty to clap an extinguisher upon so curious a spirit, which contenteth not itself with things, the nature and properties of which lie open to our investigations. Scripture is dumb as to what the Sun really is ; and however unsatisfactory what is therein contained, touching the matter, may be to inquisitive philosophers, it has the negative merit of being as good as any other. All we are there told being, that God made the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, together with all things else ; and " he made two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night ; he made the Stars also ;" but, as before hinted, what is contained in the book of Genesis affecting the creation, is a mere cosmogonic fable, most

likely picked up by Moses in his commerce with the Egyptians; as we read that he was skilled in all the learning of that people.

The god of day, or the god Sun, was the great god of the ancient world, and has been worshipped by every people on the globe; we shall find that it prevailed in both continents—the *old* as well as the *new* world, and was personified in all the sacred allegories, and poetically described as suffering the destiny of mortals; everywhere we read of the birth, death, and resurrection of the Sun; he had his cradle and his tomb, whether called Adonis, Osiris, Hercules, Bacchus, Atys, Chrishna, Mithra, or Christ!

In Ethiopia the worship of the Sun prevailed, and temples of a most magnificent character were erected in honour of that deity; and symbols of his power, strength and glory, were placed therein to receive the homage of the adorers; but the people of Ethiopia were black, and among them, as we may readily suppose, black was the most orthodox and beautiful of colours; and, as when human beings personify their ideas, and “give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name”—when they conceive of good and bad deities—they invest them with all those attributes which to themselves seem good or bad; hence in our own climate, gods and angels are delicately fair, with ruddy complexions, sweet and most heavenly countenances: whereas the devil and his imps are of a dense sooty blackness; strange heaps of ugliness, oddly compounded of every conceivable deformity; so that if the deformed, whether in body or mind, are objects of pity, then the devil and his unfortunate companions should keep our eyes eternally moist; and truly, as one of our modern orators has expressed it—these devils, as depicted by Christians, are much ill-used gentlemen. But in Ethiopia, devils were white, so that, while we say “black as the devil,” they, with equal propriety, and certainly, to us it appears, with more elegance, say “as white as the devil”—themselves being black, and that of course being the right colour, they could not do less than dress up their gods in the best manner, and with the choicest material they had; while the unfortunate devils were made not unlike a very ugly, pale, and deformed Englishman, with certain additions, according to the taste of individuals.

A modern writer* of great research, has the following curious observations relating to Chrishna: “On the colour of the gods of the ancients, and of the identity of them all with the god Sol, and with

* Mr. Godfrey Higgins.—See *Anacalypsis* v. 1, p. 138-2.

the Chrishna of India, nothing more need be said. The reader has already seen the striking marks of similarity in the *history of Chrishna*, and the stories related of *Jesus* in the Romish and Heretical books. He probably will not think that their effect is destroyed, as Mr. Maurice flatters himself, by the word Chrishna, in the Indian language signifying black, and the god being of that colour, when he is informed of what Mr. Maurice was probably ignorant, that in all the Romish countries of Europe, in France, Italy, Germany, &c., the god Christ, as well as his mother, are described in their old paintings and statues to be *black*. The infant god, in the arms of his black mother, his arms and drapery white, is himself perfectly black. If the reader doubts my word, he may go to the Cathedral at Moulins, to the famous Chapel of the Virgin at Loretto, to the Church of the Annunciator, to the Church of St. Lazarro or the Church of St. Stephen at Genoa, to St. Francisco at Pisa, to the Church at Brixen in the Tyrol, and to that at Padua, to the Church of St. Theodore at Munich, in the two last of which, the whiteness of the eyes and teeth, and the studied redness of the lips are very observable; to the Church and to the Cathedral of Augsburgh, where are a black virgin and child as large as life; to Rome, to the Borghese Chapel Maria Maggiore, to the Pantheon, to a small Chapel of St. Peter's, on the right-hand side on entering, near the door,—and in fact, to almost innumerable other churches in countries professing the Romish religion. There is scarcely an old church in Italy where some remains of the black virgin and black child are not to be met with." The same author observes that "the Romish Chrishna is black in India, black in Europe, and black he must remain, like the ancient gods of Greece, as we have just seen. But, after all, what was he but their Jupiter, the second person of their trinurti, or trinity, the Logos of Parmenides and Plato, an incarnation or emanation of the Solar power!" So much for the black virgin and her black child, formerly worshipped by the dark races of India, and even now adored in our Catholic churches—the devotees little dreaming that the black god Chrishna was but a symbol of the Sun, and that the black virgin mother was nothing more than the virgin of the constellations, painted black, because, as before observed, that was the national colour; had the people been green, their gods, angels, and virgin mothers would have been the colour of grass.

The idea of a son born of a *virgin-mother*, clearly relates to the

Sun, which our readers will at once allow, when they are informed that in ages past, on the 25th of December, precisely at midnight, the celestial sign which appeared above or upon the horizon, and seemed to preside at the opening or commencement of the new solar revolution, was the virgin of the constellations. The Sun was said to be born at the solstice, or the standing still of the Sun in winter, after which it seemed to retake its route towards our hemisphere, and re-unite itself to the virgin at the grand fete of the Assumption, or the re-union of the mother with her son. It is an interesting fact, that the Sun, called sometimes Chrishna, sometimes Atys, sometimes Adonis, and sometimes Christ, appeared in the heavens to pass from the womb of the virgin of the constellations at the very moment that we celebrate his appearance in the world, or his nativity. No fact in history is better established than this—that it was customary, in times past, to represent the Sun under the emblem of a newly-born infant, at the solstice of winter, when the great luminary seemed to have so little force, that it was aptly typified by the weakest of all creatures—an infant just passed from the womb of its mother. *Let our Christian readers bear in mind that the worship of the virgin and her child, was common in the East, ages before the generally received account of Christ's appearance in the flesh; that the god Sun, or of day, was adored under the name of Bacchus in Thrace, Greece, India, Arabia, and Asia Minor; under the name of Osiris in Egypt, of Mithra in Persia, of Adonis in Phenecia—and all the ancient authors who treat of these subjects, confess that Bacchus, Adonis, and Osiris are mere symbols of the Sun, under different names, as Pan was a symbol of the Universe!*

It is impossible to walk ten yards in Egypt without at once seeing that the genius of its ancient people led them at all times to give an outward and tangible form to their astronomical speculations. Personification of the apparent strength, grandeur, and motion of the heavenly bodies, was the very soul and basis of their theology. The gods of the Egyptian priests were material gods; this is proved by the admirable writings of their poets and philosophers. Thus we find that Sirius, or the dog star, was honoured under the name of Anubis, and in the form of a *sacred dog*, worshipped in their temples. It was this star that appeared above the horizon just before the periodical inundation of the Nile; and seemed to warn the Egyptians of the approach of the inundation; and as dogs are the most faithful and watchful of all animals, it re-

ceived the appellation dog star, or *sacred dog*. The species of vulture now found in South Africa, the large light-coloured *vultur perenopterus*, was one of the sacred birds of the Egyptians. The sparrow-hawk was typical of the Sun; the Ibis the Moon; and cats are even now held sacred by that singular people; indeed, so great is their devotion to those creatures, that were even a priest by accident to destroy one of them, it might cost him his life.

In Egypt was erected the famous temple in the town of the Sun, or Heliopolis; wherein was placed a statue of the god of day. We are told it was splendidly ornamented, and represented a beardless young man, with one arm elevated, holding in his hand a whip, in the attitude of the driver of a chariot; in his left was a thunderbolt and a bundle of ears of corn: such was one of the Egyptian symbols of the Sun in their ancient temple.

We learn from Cheremon, and the most learned Egyptian priests, that the ancient priests of their nation admitted no causes nor existences independent of the universe itself; but acknowledged for gods, the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, which composed the zodiac; and all those which by their rising and setting marked the division of the signs; their subdivision into decans, the horoscope, and the Stars which presided over it, which were called chiefs of the sky. They assure us that the Egyptians regarded the Sun as a great God, architect and moderator of the universe; explaining not only the fable of Osiris, but all other religious fables, by the Stars; their motions, their appearance, and disappearance, by the phases of the Moon; the increase or the diminution of her light, by the progressive march of the Sun, by the division of the heavens, and the division of time into two great parts; the one affecting the day, the other the night; finally, by the action of physical causes, which they considered as the sovereign arbiters of human destiny, that they honored by sacrifices, and to which they raised images. Our readers will we trust now understand why it was men became idolators, and worshipped many gods; but they will also not fail to perceive, that to admire the operations of Nature, and to consider it as *unique* and *one*, was not idolatry; which can only truly be said to have commenced when men forsook Nature, and blindly adored the lifeless block of wood or stone as a *real God*; when it was merely a symbol or sign.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED !

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 7. WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

"He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made : for unto these days the children of Israel did burn incense to it : and he called it Nehushtan."—2 KINGS XVIII. 4.

CHRISTIANS,

Our bare assertion—that the worship of the ancient world was Pantheistical—that the people of all climes, and every part of the globe, adored as gods, angels, or fiends, the Universe, and the parts thereof—will have little weight, unless supported by well defined evidence, which we now propose to furnish. This position must be made good before we proceed to occupy another ; and though it would undoubtedly be far easier to gallop over the course by contenting ourselves with mere assertion—such haste would not be speed ; and all lovers of truth will agree that it is wiser to proceed slowly but surely, than to go ever so fast out of the right road ; and certainly no man of liberal mind—none, save the narrow and contracted intellect—will grudge us a fair opportunity to prove the absurdity and ignorance of those who believe in Christ, and think to wash out their sins in the blood of the Lamb !

Could a goodly array of names, ranged in support of error, make that error respectable—could eloquence and learning make black appear green, or some other colour, according to the taste of the

expounder—or, if the truth or falsehood of a doctrine is in anywise determinable by the number of books written in support of it, or the confidence and self-sufficiency of those who teach—then are the dogmas held by Christians sublime and heavenly. Thousands of volumes have been written to prove the reality of Christ's mission, and with very many, the notion holds that where quantity *is* there quality *must* be ; so that, with such, big books carry with them their own justification. Now, we freely declare, that if any parties expect a big book from us, they will be disappointed ; for our study is to concentrate—not to diffuse,—to collect the scattered rays of truth into one small focus, and as a moral Archimedes, burn up the vessels of error. *Multum in parvo*—a great deal in a small compass is what we desire to give. The worshipper of old authorities, merely because they are old, will not follow in our train ; for no authority, ancient or modern, will be here acknowledged save that consonant with right reason, and wearing upon it the seal or mark of experience. If the sanction of names, eminent in the Christian world, is to prevail against the teachings of history, sacred and profane, our little work will be beaten “all the world to nothing,” and it will remain undoubted that Christ did live and was a god incarnate—was born of a virgin—and a real *bona fide* descendant of Abraham—conversed with the doctors of the Jewish temples—was crucified three times in three different places, *as stated in Scripture*, and of course ascended into heaven, at least an equal number of times, as such authority might equally decide, and make it believed too, that upon a certain occasion it was broad day at full midnight ! To our evidence.

We read that at periods very remote, the Blemmyes, situated upon the confines of Ethiopia, immolated to the god Sun, human victims. The Island of Nasala, near the territory of Ichtyopages, was consecrated to that star ; and so superstitiously was it revered, that none dared to approach so awful a place, or profane by their footsteps that holy ground.

The Carthaginians invoked the Sun as a witness in their treaty with Phillip, son of Demetrius,—the Sun, the Moon, the Earth, the rivers, the meadows, and the waters were their divinities. Massinassi, when thanking the gods that Scipio had arrived in his empire, addressed himself to the Sun, as Agamemnon in Homer sacrifices to the Sun and to the Earth.

All the inhabitants of the immense African continent revered the

Sun and the Moon as the two grand divinities. The inhabitants of Congo, Angola, the Peak of Teneriffe—all joined in one worship—the worship of Nature. We have this on the authority of the Spaniards, who first visited them.

The Caabah, before the coming of Mahomet, was a magnificent temple, consecrated to the Moon ; and the black stone, so fervently kissed by Musselmen at the present day, is pretended to have been part of an ancient statue of Saturn. This most ancient of all the gods was symbolized by a serpent with its tail in its mouth, signifying that time neither had beginning nor end,—an idea aptly typified by a circle. The god was represented with a scythe in his right hand ; for that time, while itself ever the same, “without change or shadow of turning,” mows down all things else. The fable relates that Saturn devoured his own offspring—by which is meant, that time swallows all things, though nothing is added, nothing diminished, from the sum total of matter, by the different forms and existences such matter assumes.

The worship of the Arabs was Sabism—a worship universally spread in the East,—the Sky and Stars were the great objects of adoration. The Moon was an object of special worship. By the Saracens it was called Cabar, or great ; and the crescent yet ornaments the religious temples of the Turks.

Sabism was the system of the Chaldeans ; and all the orientals pretend that Ibrahim, or Abraham, was educated in that doctrine ; thus runs the story ; whereas Ibrahim, or Abraham, is a purely fabulous character, and all that is related in Genesis thereupon, is allegory. Let the reader remember what is said by Saint Paul, that “God quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.” This we know was the case “when all were children and were in bondage under the elements of the world.” Vain are the attempts to conciliate such fables with the facts of history, and barren of good results, producing only a moral abortion in the shape of a romantic fictitious philosophy. St. Augustine fell into this error, and most inconsistently maintained the existence of Christ as a real personage—acknowledging his mission as Saviour of the world at the very moment he declared the two first chapters of the book of Genesis were allegorical!—but what reader, not blinded by fanaticism, can fail to see that the two first chapters of the book of Genesis are the fundamentals upon which the belief in Christ rests. To give up the literal meaning of those chapters,

to declare as Augustine did, that all was fabulous—pure romance—is at once to give up the literal history of Christ, which is based upon it.

Well might Beausobre say that Augustine abandoned the Old Testament to the Manicheans, by declaring that it would be impossible to believe the Scripture as it is written, without wounding true piety, and attributing to God acts that would be held disgraceful in men, and yet more unworthy in a Creator or Ruler of the Universe. The story about Abraham was first told and first believed in the East—the very fountain of allegory; and if we dwell upon it, it is with a view that all may know the true spirit of the gospel; besides, the history of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Christ, must all stand or fall together; for if Adam did not fall from a state of innocence, as is generally supposed, Christ's death upon the cross, as an expiation or atonement, rendered necessary by the fall, is clearly absurd. If Abraham never existed, how can Christ have been his son?—and yet we read in the new Testament—"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." For the honour of Moses, and the sake of right reason, we must recur to allegory. In the 12th chapter of Genesis we read, "And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him." "And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai, Abram's wife." The idea of the Lord God of the Heavens and the Earth, who can measure the waters of the globe in the hollow of his hand, plaguing Pharaoh about Abram's wife, is preposterous and absurd! In the chapter which precedes this, there is a ridiculous story about Babel, in which we are told that in those times the whole earth was of one language and of one speech! "And they (the people) said, go to, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach up unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. And the *Lord came down to see* the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." The idea of an omnipresent God "coming down to see," is comical enough: a God that is everywhere, taking a trip from the clouds, to see a tower that, ten miles from the earth, to ordinary optics, would have looked like an ant hill, or a dust heap,—besides there are neither tops nor bottoms in Nature—ups nor downs; but nothing is difficult with believers, who, while they one moment declare that the

heaven of heavens cannot contain their God, the next moment represent him, not exactly like Plato's man—an animal without feathers, but with two wings growing out of his shoulders, flapping between earth and heaven, bearing, as some one has observed, a most scandalous, profane, and impious likeness to the old Pagan Jupiter. "Go to, (said the Lord) let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Now, we ask any sensible reader, whether it is not enough to shock all sense of propriety to interpret such language *literally*? There was some magnificence in the conception of Jupiter hurling his thunderbolt, and Neptune with his trident, exciting and calming by his will, the immense ocean of waters; but a literal interpretation of the book of Genesis is horrid blasphemy, if anything can be blasphemy. The metamorphosis of Jupiter with the Greeks, as that of Vishnou with the Indians, are ridiculous enough, but are certainly entertaining: but who can be entertained by stories which degrade human conceptions of the Deity? Well might the apostle say, "there is none that understandeth—there is none that seeketh after God!"

The idea of a Deity, "who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth; who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains"—the uncreated—the eternal—the Holy one of Israel! promenading in a garden, crying out to Adam—the man whom he had made—"Where art thou!" as though omnipresence needed such information! and after Adam was found, and had called Eve (the mother of all), "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them!" Strange employment for Deity; but the truth is, all shocks and offends when read as matter of fact,—all is pleasant and ingenious enough as an allegory. The hidden meaning of the sacred books is worth searching for; but to believe chapter and verse, *according to the letter*—to suppose that "the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it;" that he, the Lord God, caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and he took one of his ribs and he closed up the flesh instead thereof; "And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto man;" that these beings were organized to reproduce, and yet destined to be immortal! to produce an infinity of other beings, who would again go on peopling to all eternity,—all to be nourished by the fruits of a great garden, some-

where in the east, but the Lord only now knows where ! that an apple was gathered by our common mother Eve, tempted so to do by a cunning serpent, “ more subtle than any beast of the field,” which fatal act caused the Lord to inflict miseries that the tongue of man cannot describe, upon countless generations, who were unborn when this deed was done !—a crime which our priests inform us, could only be expiated by another infinitely greater—the nailing of a god upon a cross !—to suppose all this, is to dishonor Deity, and degrade human reason !—further, the stain transmitted to us from our first parents, was only to be washed away by the blood of Christ—an incarnate god !! But, nevertheless, though this has been done—though we have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, we are not pure—not a stain has come out ! In addition to all this, we are told, that since that terrible event, as a punishment for the curiosity of the woman Eve, all women are condemned to bring forth in sorrow and in pain—as though the pains of child-birth were not a necessary result of her organization, and suffered more or less by all animals who have not partaken of the fatal apple. This is of a piece with what is said of the serpent, who was “ cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ; doomed to crawl upon its belly, and eat dust all the days of its life,—as though a serpent could ever do any thing else but crawl ! With regard to eating dust, serpents are by no means contented with that fare, but gorge good things most desperately ; but, in a figurative sense, or rather a philosophic one, all things are dust,—“ from dust they come, and to dust they all return.” Well might the Christian saints and doctors, the Augustines, Origenes, and the rest, desire to throw the book of Genesis overboard, as an allegory ; but in doing so, they not only disprove the real history of Adam, Eve, and their companion, the wily eloquent serpent, but make an allegory of Abraham, an allegory of Christ, and an allegory altogether ; which view of the subject is precisely that we are endeavouring to support,—and to call us blasphemers for so doing, is to affix the brand of blasphemy upon the respectable and most honored saints and doctors of the Christian churches !

To return. Abraham is said by Orientals, to have been a worshipper of the elements, the stars—the religion called Sabism, before mentioned. It is said that even now, upon the ruins of ancient Persepolis, may be seen a mosque called Mesched Eschams, or Mosque of the Sun. In that town was erected the famous an-

cient temple of Bel, or the Sun, the great divinity of the Babylonians. They also worshipped the sky, under the name of Jupiter, the moon, and the planet Venus, fire, earth, air, the winds, and the waters. Each Arab tribe was under the invocation of a star, that they honored as their protecting deity, or guardian angel: the tribe Asael was consecrated to the star Mercury; the tribes Idamus and Lachamus honored the planet Jupiter; the tribe Hanuar was consecrated to the Sun; the tribe Cennab to the Moon; the tribe Misa was under the protection of the star called Aldebaran; the tribe Tai under that of Canopus; each tribe revered one of the celestial bodies as its tutelary genius.

The fire worshippers of Persia have been immortalised by the poets in their religious books: at every page may be seen invocations to Mithra, or the Sun, to the moon, to the stars, and to the elements, the mountains, and the trees. The rivers and the fountains were the subject of their delicious poetry, which chanted the wonders of nature. The fire Ether, which they supposed to circulate throughout the universe, was represented in their pyrees, or fire temples, by the sacred fire kept continually alive by the Magi, or priests; we find also the same worship among the Greeks, who had the sacred fire in their temples, tended by Vestals, so called from Vesta, or Earth, models of purity and excellence; as fire was held to be the most subtle and pure of bodies. None but virgins could be Vestals, who were greatly honoured by the Greeks, and other nations; but any departure from the strictest chastity was punished by burying the unfortunate culprit alive.

By the Persians, each planet was supposed to contain a portion of the subtle fluid, so that each planet had consecrated to it a pyree, or temple, in which incense was offered up to its honor,—Mars, Jupiter, and all the planets were thus worshipped. We read that Darius, before giving battle to Alexander, invoked the god Mars, and the sacred eternal fire, and on the top of his tent might be seen an image of the brilliant star of day, enclosed in crystal, reflecting its scorching rays to an immense distance.

The disciples of Zoroastre, the celebrated Persian sage, addressed their prayers to the Sun, the moon, the stars,—but principally to fire, as being the most subtle and most pure.

How man first applied fire, or even discovered its qualities, is not known; but as fire always produces the sensations of warmth and heat, and as the Sun's rays produce analogous effects, that luminary

was considered as the focus of heat, and the generator of life. Pythagoras placed the substance of the divinity in the fire or fluid called Ether, of which the Sun seemed to be the source or focus. Parmenides supposed that the world was enveloped by a crown of fire or of light—contending that fire was the substance of deity. Zeno called Ether the great god. Cleanthe, another celebrated ancient philosopher, admitted the dogma of the divine nature of the Universe, but considered Ether as universally active, enveloping the spheres and penetrating all substances. Aniximander held the like notion—calling gods Ether, and the Air.

That the ancients were aware that heat is life, and the absence of it death, is certain. They also knew that the luminous body called the Sun, if not hot itself, was at least the generator of heat—that is, of life. They called heat the soul of man; and as all heat came from the Sun, the souls of animals were supposed to have no other source. They contended that one sort of soul, or life, had been distributed to all animals without reason; but intelligent beings had something superadded, to mere life; but as all bodies are formed from one kind of earth, and all living and breathing things see but one light, and receive the same air, so, in like manner, there is but one soul—which is heat, variously distributed in an infinity of organized bodies; there being but one intelligence, though unequally distributed and mysteriously divided and subdivided: as the light of the Sun is one, however dispersed upon the walls, upon the mountains, and the millions of divine objects.

Among the ruins of Persepolis may be distinguished the figure of a king on his knees before an image of the Sun, and an emblem of the sacred fire, that the Magi tell the people, formerly descended upon the earth. In ancient fable it is related that man was formed of clay by Prometheus, or providence, only the artificer mixed up with the mass, particles taken from different animals—seeming to intimate that other creatures lived and breathed before man; and the fable runs that he, Prometheus, being desirous to endow the clay he had modelled with vitality, stole up into heaven with a bundle of birch rods, and kindling them at the fiery chariot of the Sun, did bring down fire from heaven, and endowed dead clay with heat, the principal of life.—This was the origin of man according to the fable!

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED !

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 8.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

"Every abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods."—DEUT. XII. 31.

CHRISTIANS,

The story related of Jupiter is fabulous—the story of Christ is no less so; the basis of the Pagan religion was allegory—and the foundation of the Christian faith is allegory; Jupiter, we read, was cut to pieces by the giant Typhon, who carried away his sinews, which were afterwards stolen by Mercury and restored to their owner. Jupiter took Metis to wife, when, finding her pregnant, he did eat her up, when he himself did conceive, and from his head sprang forth Pallas—armed. No sane reader will take this story in a literal sense; but, however it may appear when thus taken,—as an allegory it is pleasant and admirable; for as Typhon signified swelling, and sometimes evil, to the Egyptians, the sea, which they detested, was called Typhon, as Pan signified universality, and Nemesis revenge, so Metis signified counsel, which at once gives us a key to the fable; for after Jupiter devoured Metis, that is, *good counsel*, he became pregnant with wisdom, and from his brain burst forth Pallas, sometimes called Minerva, the goddess of wisdom.

Nor is this love of allegory so heathenish as some may be dispo-

sed to believe, nor by any means confined to historians called profane; for the most valuable philosophies contained in the Scriptures, are concealed under the veil of allegory. Whatever sceptics may say against the Bible, it is at least an old book—a most useful record of ancient times and usages—full of comparisons, allusions, similies, tropes, metaphors, fables, and parables,—as said by God himself: “I have also spoke by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions; and used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets.” How absurd, then, must those writers be, who would pass off fables and parables as facts and literal truths; this course it is which has thrown such disgrace upon teachers of religion, that is, multipliers of visions and venders of similitudes—visions so perfectly ridiculous, and similitudes so *unsimilar* to anything bearing the impress of right reason, that human nature was disgraced thereby; and truly is it said, “Their throats are as an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips.”

In ancient times, it was common to speak in parable; for, as Lord Bacon observes, “Hieroglyphics were in use before writing; so were Parables in use before arguments;” the use of parable, or, indeed, any form of teaching, is to illustrate and instruct; the abuse of it, is in wrapping up and concealing the sense of our speech or writing, “darkening counsel, by words without knowledge.” From the Scripture, then, we learn that the Scripture abounds with allegory, fiction, and fable; and from that same Scripture we also learn, that Christ was not a descendant of Abraham, but an ideal embodiment of good,—as Satan was an ideal embodiment of evil; nay, it can be shewn, and shall be shewn, by Scriptural texts, that Abraham never had a real tangible existence—but is an allegorical character. Let the Christian reader remember that we are told in the first chapter of the new Testament, that Christ was the son of Abraham; we read, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham;” but, as shall be hereafter seen, there never was such a person as Abraham; so that, to talk about Christ being the son of a man that never existed, is to talk wildly. Well may it be said, “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”

In due season we shall come to a full consideration of Biblical history; the arguments it contains against the existence of a bodily Jesus Christ, are crushing, and amount to moral demonstration;

nothing can long resist their force. Yes, the book so extravagantly lauded by some, and as extravagantly abused by others,—hated by the thorough-going Infidel—adored by the thorough-going Believer,—but used by men of wit and sense; the idol of the spiritualist—the abomination of the materialist; the latter rejecting all—the former swallowing everything;—here both are right, and both are wrong. Neither the mere materialist, nor the mere spiritualist, can study the Bible with full profit; they may search the Scriptures—they may toil much, and catch but little: unless they unite and cease to run, as heretofore, in parallel lines; for materialism may be aptly called the first person of the philosophic trinity; spiritualism being the son,—for spirit is born of matter; and few will deny that it is within the compass of human ability to conceive of existences without motion, substances without spirits, matter without mind, body without soul; but a first-rate spiritualist would be puzzled to imagine soul, spirit, or sense, without substance, or motion without parts.

Matter, then, in the moral trinity, is the father—spirit is the son, as begot of matter—but reason is the holy ghost, which will reconcile the father and the son, shew that they are one, that these three are one, that all are *one*—a trinity in unity, comprising universal unity. The holy ghost, or right reason, would shew at once that a peacock is a peacock, as materialists insist; while the holy ghost would agree with the spiritualist, that in a spiritual sense, serpents might speak, and asses discourse most eloquently, as in the case of the ass of the prophet Balaam. Nor will the Scriptural text, “The same hour was the thing fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dews of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws,” be any difficulty in the way of the spiritualist—for he searcheth not the Scripture for the *letter*, but the *spirit*, for the spirit is life; but the letter killeth: and Paul speaketh wisely when he saith, “As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and *calleth those things which be not, as though they were* ;” so that, although, as said (2nd Tim. 3, v. 16) “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” it is only profitable to those who take from materialism that which is good, who cast not off spiritualism, but use it for what it

is worth, led by the holy ghost, or right reason, which, though the last person in the moral trinity, is the first in excellence. Let no Christian be alarmed, for are we not told, that the first shall be last, and the last shall be first ?

Taken literally, no person, of sane mind, can believe that Samson's strength lay in his hair—that he caught three hundred foxes, or three hundred jackals (as some natural theologians *now* contend that they were), tied their tails together, and setting fire to them, sent them amid the standing corn of the Philistines ; what is said in the book of Judges, notwithstanding. “ And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took fire-brands, and turned tail to tail, and put a fire-brand in the midst, between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.” The character of Samson, like that of Hercules, is purely fabulous. What is said about his rending a young lion as a kid, and, he had nothing in his hand—killing three thousand Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass—being deprived of his strength, and subsequently of his life, by the artifices of a woman,—squares exactly with the stories told of Hercules, who, like Samson, was destroyed by the artifices of a woman, and so enamoured of fighting, that when he had nothing else to fight, he amused himself by slaughtering wild beasts, and other heroic exercises.

The Bible is a book of riddles, parables, allegories, and deep meanings ; almost every line has a spiritual, as well as material sense ; that which appears, and that which doth not appear ; food for faith, and food for wisdom ; rank nonsense, and fine philosophy ; according to the capacities of those who read. Nor need our readers be informed that the most admirable philosophy, if misconceived, hath no advantage over folly. What can be more absurd than the literal interpretation of Scriptural texts ; what more admirable than that truly sublime sense within the heaps which form a kind of envelope or covering ; transparent to the man possessed with the holy ghost, but opaque, dense, and impenetrable to the mental visions of others. Yes, mere idle words are Scriptural texts, as now used—mere shells, which must be broken ere we can obtain the kernel of truth. To believe it as it is written, is to outrage reason, and common sense ; it is to sacrifice judgment upon the altar of folly, and at the same time, run counter to Biblical

texts, which plainly tell us that the Bible is a book of allegories, parables, similitudes, and words, which carry upon the face of them one sense—but when probed and searched into, are found to possess another; in short, “*calleth those things which be not, as though they were.*”

That the Scriptures are much abused by unscrupulous men; that they are ransacked for texts, to support the most impious and unholy dogmas, is plain; all parties have used them in turn, and all found arguments in support of their views;—the tyrant an apology for his despotism; the murderer for his cruelty; the debauchee for his lust; and the deceiver for his jesuitry. This, which, in the eyes of some, is as dust, rendering them blind to the real merits and demerits of the book; to the sharp-sighted, will merely shew that it is a book of riddles—much read, but little understood; like all ancient writings, disfigured by mysticism; like them, a compound or medley of good and evil—truth and falsehood. The Bible is a sealed book; and the like may be said of all, or nearly all, the books of the ancient poets: for verily, they are books of wonders, of riddles, and of spiritualities, which a mere matter of fact reader can never comprehend; in short, the Testaments, old and new, are full of many important truths believed to be false—and many falsehoods thought to be true. But as gold can only be purged from its dross by physical labour, so the saving truths, contained in the Scriptures, can only become the prize of those who are content to pay the legitimate price—mental exertion: “for the husbandman that laboureth must be the first partaker of the fruits.”

Did not men most inconsistently hate those who tell them the truth, they would long since have known that no book can be so written as to contain all truth, and nought but truth; besides, the Bible was written in remote times, when men were just emerging from the darkness of idolatry. The early Christian fathers were infected by a superstitious spirit—“mere children in bondage, under the elements of the world,” “who observed days, months, times, and years.” Even Origen, one of the most learned Christian writers, held the opinion, that the government of the world was presided over by gods and spirits. “I advance boldly (said he) that there are celestial virtues which have the government of the world; the one presides over the earth, the other over the planets, others over the rivers and the fountains, some others superintend the wind and the rain.” Astrology placed a part of these powers in the stars;

thus, the Hyades controlled the rains, Osiris the tempests, Sirius the great heats, Aries the flocks and the birds. The Hebrews and the Christians supposed that four angels had charge of the four corners of the world. The Persians believed that four great stars, which were placed at the cardinal points, performed that duty ; and their astrologers in like manner accorded the surveillance to four planets ; in short, the administration of the universe was divided between an infinite number of intelligences,—whether called gods, angels, heros, or geniuses,—all of whom interested themselves, more or less, in human affairs ; for, with the uninstructed among the ancients, wherever motion was, there life was supposed to be ; and all effects, of which the causes were unknown, seemed to those who knew not the mechanism, as intelligent living effects. The Sun appeared to move ; the savage did not for a moment suppose that it could move, except by its own will,—it appeared to him, a huge hill of flame, moving majestically from east to west,—and he in his simplicity, concluded that the Sun was a living creature—adored and worshipped it accordingly, and statues were placed in temples, to represent the force, brightness, and grandeur of the great luminary.

The opinion that the Sun, the Moon, and even the Stars, were animated and conducted by intelligences, was common among the Chaldeans, the Jews, the Persians, and the Greeks, as well as the Phenecians, the Ethiopians, and their descendants the Egyptians. The Christians placed an angel in each star, and these angels were supposed to conduct the celestial bodies, and regulate the movement of the spheres. Each of these geniuses, or angels, were charged with a certain department, or particular function ; cold, heat, rain, dryness, the fruits of the earth, the multiplication of flocks, the arts, the operations of agriculture, &c., all was under the inspection of an angel or a deity.

In the seventh book of the Enead, where Anchises reveals to his son the origin of souls, and the fate which attend them after death, he says—“ You should know oh my son ! that the sky and the earth, the sea, the brilliant globe of the moon, and all the stars, are moved, by a principle of life, which perpetuates their existence ; that it is a great and intelligent soul, spread in all parts of the vast body of the universe, which mingles with all, and agitates all, by an eternal motion. It is that soul which is the source of the life of man, of the flocks, of the birds, and of all the monsters which breathe in

the bosom of the waters. The living force which animates them, emanates from an eternal fire, which shines in the sky, and which, held captive in the gross matter of our bodies, is only developed as far as is permitted by the diverse mortal organizations which deaden its force and its activity. At the death of each animal, these germs of life, these portions of the spirit universal, return to their principle and to their source of life, which circulates in the starry sphere."

The Persians had their angel Chur, which guided the chariot of the Sun ; and the greeks their Apollo, who had his seat in that star. The theological books of the Persians speak of the seven grand intelligences, under the name of Amschapands, which formed the *cortege* of the god of light, called the geniuses of the seven planets. The Jews made of them, their seven archangels, ever present before the Lord. To the number seven of the planetary sphere, have been added, the fixed sphere, and the circle of the earth. The Greeks attached to these nine muses, who by their songs produced the universal harmony of the world. The Chaldeans and the Jews placed in the planetary system, other intelligences, called cherubims and seraphims, &c., to the number of nine choirs, who, by their concerts, were supposed to rejoice the Eternal.

The Indians had also their geniuses ; who presided in the different regions of the world. Their astrological system had submitted each city and each town, to the influence of a star ; it was natural for them to suppose that they were the seats of intelligent deities, who were the souls of the stars, as we find the sacred books of the Jews admit a tutelary angel of the Persians, and a tutelary angel of the Jews. That the number seven is a mystical number, and had a relation to the planetary system, was shewn in a former letter ; and in like manner the number twelve, or that of the signs through which the Sun seems to pass.

The worship of Nature and its parts, was not peculiar to the Egyptians, but universal in the ancient world. In the Egyptian system the world was regarded as a great divinity, made up or composed of an assemblage of inferior gods, or partial causes, which were nothing else than the members of the great body called God. If any curious reader doubt this, let him read the highly poetic Hymns of ancient authors, as Hesiod, Orpheus, and others, and his scepticism will be cured ; for they all relate to Nature—the motions and modifications of matter, " Let us sing (says Hesiod, when invoking the muses) to the immortal Gods, children of the earth, and

nourished by the ocean ; the brilliant stars, the immense vault of the heavens ; and the gods that from it spring ; the sea, the rivers," &c.

Even in the comparatively modern theology of the Greeks, who stole, without acknowledgment, the gods of Phenecia and of Egypt, and who were themselves so largely plundered in turn, by the first Christians, we find that the parts of the universe—the various arts, and the divers works, were divided among a crowd of deities. Jupiter was master of the heavens, yet submitted, as all the other gods, to fate or destiny, Pan's fatal sisters. Pluto presided over the lower regions, or hell ; which meant, in former times, a place for the dead ;—but since the introduction of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the opinions which grew out of that doctrine, the word hell has been wrested from its true signification,—and, from being a place for the dead, religious imposture has made of it—a place for the damned !—a fiery bottomless pit—to the bottom of which, nevertheless, we are told, the devil lies chained !! Who has not read of the angry god Neptune, and his trident, stirring up by his will, the waves of the mighty ocean ? Vulcan was the god of fire, to whom the works of the voluptuary arts are attributed. He was also the husband of Venus, or goddess of love,—which seems to intimate, that luxury and a certain kind of that passion, are wedded to each other. Diana presided over the chace, Ceres was the goddess of harvest, Bacchus was the god of wine, and protected the vintage, while Minerva, the genius of wisdom, taught the arts, and how to excel in the production of various fabrics. Every fountain had its Naiads, the mountains their Oreades, the forests their Dryades, and Hamadryades. In the Greek Pantheistical system, all was personified ; not merely had the parts of the universe, and the universe considered in its totality, a living, moving representation, or protecting genius, but even abstractions were personified. To symbolize the Sun, under the form of the robust Hercules, or the Moon by the beautiful Isis, was not all ; but wisdom, folly, rage, and lust, were typified. That Minerva was the goddess of wisdom, has been already noted. Jupiter and his thunderbolts convey an idea of power. Pandora was a highly poetic personification of the evils and the pleasures, the miseries and the happiness, that the arts of civil life introduce.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

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FROM A GERMAN JEW,

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LETTER 9. WEEKLY. ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

“The simple believeth every word; but the prudent man looketh well to his going.”—PROV. XIV. 15.

CHRISTIANS,

That singular people, the Chinese, worshipped the Sky, the Earth, and the elements, which they considered as parts of one grand whole, one intelligent being, that they called Tangki: the Chinese rendered up their offerings and prayers at the two solstices.

Of the Japanese the same may be said, as they believed that the stars were animated by intelligences or by Gods. They have even now a most splendid temple consecrated to the Sun, and they celebrate the fête of the Moon on the 7th of September.

The Talapoins, or the priests of Siam, have the greatest veneration for all the elements and the parts they called sacred of nature; and that the ancient Indians worshipped like the Persians a sacred fire, is well known to all readers. This sacred fire was produced by drawing the Sun's rays into one focus upon the summit of a stupendous mountain, regarded by them as the central point of India; and so great was their veneration for the Sun—so heart-felt their admiration—that according to Lucian, they never rendered homage to the morning star of day without turning themselves to-

wards the East, and preserving the most profound silence ; they also formed a kind of dance in imitation of the apparent motion of the brilliant luminary.

The superstitious respect paid by the Hindoos to the river Ganges, is matter of notoriety, and annually hundreds of miserable fanatics commit suicide by burying themselves beneath its waters—believing that river to be a powerful divinity ; these victims of error and delusion thus dispose of their wretched lives.

What the Ganges was, and, indeed is, to the Hindoos, the Nile was to the Egyptians, for these latter worshipped that river, the source of which was so ardently and anxiously sought after, by enterprising travellers, as a God, or one of the beneficent intelligent causes of nature. Juvenal states that the Egyptians worshipped plants and onions, which, assertion has been doubted by Millot, without, as it appears to us, sufficient reason ; for, as to the ridiculousness of such a deification, it is really no more absurd to worship plants and onions as deities, than to offer up prayers and sacrifices to the river Nile, which it is past doubt that the Egyptians did. There were altars and temples consecrated to its worship at Nilopolis or town of the Nile, with a college of priests attached thereto, who, like the generality of their order, turned the folly and credulity of the people to account, by swelling their own revenues at the expense of the pockets of their dupes.

The periodical inundation of the Nile is, indeed, a most extraordinary phenomenon, and as Egypt would have been one of the most sterile and barren of countries but for such inundations, it is easy to understand why that noble river should have been devoutly worshipped by the Egyptians,—for though they had a strange antipathy to the sea, and, indeed, water of any kind, yet they sincerely adored the river Nile, because, by its overflowings, their dry and arid lands were moistened and converted into the richest of soils ; and the Egyptians, like other men, love exceedingly that which benefits and gives them pleasure, and have a full measure of hate for all those things which mar their happiness.

The water of the Ganges was a source of innumerable blessings to the Hindoos ; hence it was esteemed divine ; they also worshipped the Sun as a great divinity : this we have on the authority of Clement of Alexandria. All the Indians, even the spiritualists, revered those magnificent flambeaux of nature—the Sun and the

Moon, that they sometimes called the two eyes of the Deity. Every year a fête was celebrated in honour of the Sun, on the 9th of January. They also admitted five elements, to which they have erected five Pagodas. The Bramins of the present day tend a sacred fire, drawn from the Sun, upon the mountain called Sirou-namaly, for which fire they have the most profound veneration; nor do they ever suffer it to become extinguished. We have good reason to believe that the fires at this day tended by the priests of India, have been kept alive through countless centuries.

Enough has been said to shew that the worship of the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and the elements, in short, of Nature, as a whole, and in its parts, was the basis of the religions of Asia. We might fill a volume with additional evidence, but however desirable this may be thought by a certain class of readers, such an extensive review would too far swell the bulk of this little work, and defeat the object we have in view—which is, to give an epitome of ancient superstitions as they existed in the different quarters of the globe, with a view to prepare the mind of our readers for the great truth—that *the Christian religion was borrowed from the religions of the East!* which were themselves based upon the worship of the Universe and its parts. Religious opinions have travelled from East to West—civilization has travelled with them, and materially modified them, but *their grand features are still the same.*

We have seen that the ancient Greeks, according to the divine Plato, had no other gods than those adored by the barbarians—as the Greeks used to call them—of other nations, and these gods were the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and the Earth. The choir in the *Œdipus* of Sophocles invoked the Sun as being the first of all the gods, and their chief. The Earth was adored in the island of Cos, and a temple was erected for its worship at Athens and Sparta, its altar and its oracle were at Olympia. The oracle of Delphi was originally consecrated to it. Pausanias, an author of much reputation, has given a description of Greece, and its religious monuments, in every page of which may be seen traces of nature and its worship,—every where we read of altars, of temples, of statues, consecrated to the Sun, the Moon, the Pleiades, the Goat, the Bear, also to night, to the seas, lakes, rivers, &c.

In Laconia might be seen seven columns raised to the seven planets. The Sun had his statue and the Moon her fountain in

the same country, and the inhabitants of Megalopolis sacrificed to the elements,—particularly to the air. To the north wind they had consecrated a temple and built a sacred wood.

The Macedonians adored Estia, or fire, and addressed prayers to Beda, or the element of water. The celebrated Alexander, king of Macedonia, sacrificed to the Sun, to the Moon, and to the Earth. Homer gives the epithet of sacred to several rivers. Nestor and his companions sacrifice a bull to the river Achelous. Achilles invokes the north winds and the sweet zephyrs. The Greeks considered rivers as sacred and divine, as well because of the perpetuity or unchangeableness of their courses, as because they seemed to infuse strength and nutriment into vegetables, watered the plants, and allayed the thirst of animals; and probably, because water is one of the first principles of nature—one of the most powerful agents of the universal force, or great Being.

In Thessaly the people honoured and nourished the sacred raven, in honour of the Sun. A representation of that bird may be seen at this day upon the religious monuments of Mithra, in Persia. In Rome and Italy there are innumerable monuments of the worship rendered to Nature and its principal agents. All the world has heard of the famous temple of Tellus, or the Earth, which served for the assemblies of the senate. In Latium was a fountain consecrated to the Sun, by the side of which were raised two altars, upon which Eneas sacrificed when he arrived in Italy; and we are told, that Romulus instituted certain games called games of the circus, in honour of that Star, which measures the year in its course, and the four elements, which it unceasingly modifies by its powerful action. The Emperor Aurelian built at Rome a temple to the star of the day, that he enriched with gold and precious stones, and Augustus, before him, had caused the images of the Sun and of the Moon to be taken from Egypt and carried before him to Rome in his great triumph over Anthony and Cleopatra.

In the history of Sicily we read of oxen consecrated to the Sun; and the island itself was once called the Island of the Sun. The oxen which devoured Ulysses and his companions, when touching upon that place, were consecrated to that star. In Crete and in Spain the same worship was formerly found; in the latter country special honour was given to the star of the morning and twilight.

All the northern nations, known under the general name of Celtic, worshipped fire, water, air, the earth, the Sun, the Moon, the stars, the vault of the heavens, the trees, the rivers, the fountains, &c. Julius Cæsar, the vanquisher of the Gauls, assures us, that the ancient Germans adored nought, save the visible cause, and its visible agents,—worshipping nothing more than the gods they saw, and by which they were influenced,—the Sun, the Moon, fire or Vulcan, and the earth under the name of Herta.

The celebrated Charlemagne, in his “*Capitulaires*,” proscribed and forbid, under pain of the severest penalties, the ancient usage of placing lighted candles by the sides of trees and fountains, with a view to render them a superstitious worship. Canute, the great Danish conqueror of the Saxons, prohibited the worship that the people of this country then offered up to the Sun, to the Moon, to fire, to running waters, to fountains, forests, &c. We read that the Franks, who passed from Italy under the command of Theudibert, immolated the wives and children of the Goths, and offered them up as a sacrifice to the river of the Po, as the first fruits of the war. The Germans also had a custom of immolating horses to the rivers,—nay, it was a common practice with the people of many ancient nations, to precipitate animals into the waters, as an offering to the deities they supposed to preside over them.

From what has been already written, the careful reader will gather the fact, that we cannot point to a single people of the ancient world, among whom was not formerly established the worship of Nature and its principal agents; and in order to complete this abridged history of ancient worship, we will pass to America, and shew that all was there new, *save the religion*; for the religion of the Aborigines of America, like the religions of all other nations, was natural religion. Yes, in America, all presents to the traveller from the old continent, a new scene, as well in the order physical as the order political or moral. All there is indeed new,—quadrupeds, plants, trees, fruits, reptiles, birds, manners, usages, laws, government,—all, save religion, which alone harmonizes with that of the ancient world. On both continents temples were raised to the Sun, the Moon, the sky, the stars, the earth, and the elements, which were adored as living, moving intelligences.

The Incas of Peru called themselves children of the Sun; they raised magnificent temples and consecrated them to that star, and

fêtes were instituted to its honour. In Peru, the Sun was regarded, as well as in Ethiopia, India, Egypt, and Phenecia, as the great and eternal source of the best gifts of Nature. The Moon was likewise an object of adoration with the simple Peruvians, and was called the mother of all sublunary things. She was honoured both as the wife and mother of the Sun. Venus, the most brilliant planet, after the Sun, had also her altars and her worshippers, as well as the meteors, the lightning, the thunder, and, above all, the brilliant Iris, or rainbow ; and, singularly enough, in Peru, virgins were charged, as the vestals at Persia and Rome, with the sacred and perpetual fire.

The same worship was established at Mexico, with a pomp and magnificence that might be expected from a comparatively instructed people. The Mexicans adored the sky, to which they gave the name of Creator, or Admirable ; and we are told that there was not a single known part of nature that had not its worshippers and adorers.

The inhabitants of the Isthmus of Panama, and of all that part of America called Terra Firma, believed that there was one god in the sky, and that god was the Sun, husband of the Moon ; they adored these two stars as the two supreme causes which regulated the world. It was the same with the people of Brazil, with the Caribs, the people of the Floridas, the Indians on the side of Cumana, the savages of Virginia, of the Canadas, and of Hudson's Bay.

The savages of North America make no treaty without calling the Sun to witness, as a pledge of their faith, as we have seen done by Agamemnon, in Homer ; the same is also related by Polybius of the Carthagenians. When the North American Indians smoke with their enemies, the Calumet, or *Pipe of Peace*, they push its smoke towards the Sun. According to the ancient traditions of these Indians, it was to a certain people called the Pani's, that the god Sun had given the Calumet.

It would be easy to extend our researches in this direction, but enough has been said to prove that the worship of Nature should be regarded as the primitive and universal religion of the two worlds. To which proofs, drawn from the history of the people of the two continents, others might be added, did space permit, derived from their political and religious monuments, of the divisions

and distributions of the sacred and social orders, of their fêtes, of their hymns, of their religious chants, and from the opinions of their philosophers. Nor will the reflecting mind fail to be struck with the fact, that it must necessarily have been that when men ceased, from causes various, and to us unknown, to assemble upon the tops of mountains, there to contemplate the wonderful machinery of the heavens, the Sun, the Moon, and the stars,—their first divinities,—and offered up their incense within the precincts of their own narrow temples, that they wished to worship *there* the images or symbols of their gods, and that wonderful *ensemble* called the Universe. Figuratively it may be said, that the starry heavens descended upon the soils of Egypt and Greece, there to take a body and a form in the images of the gods, whether living or dead. We may likewise remark, that all the ancient fêtes were connected with the grand epochs of nature, and to the celestial system. Everywhere we find the solstitial and equinoxial fêtes,—above all do we find that of the winter solstice, when the Sun seems to augment its force, and retake its route towards our climate ; also that of the equinox of spring, for it is then we have in our hemisphere the long days, and all nature seems laughing and glad, as though rejoicing in the presence of the Sun, which, by its active and beneficent heat, sets in motion the springs of vegetation, develops all the germs enclosed in the chilled earth, and ripens our fruits.

We now take leave of this part of our subject, as every careful reader who has attentively considered our former Letters, will agree that they fully prove that personification was not merely the basis of poetry in the ancient as in the modern world, but likewise the basis of ancient as well as modern religions. It has been shewn that the Indians, the Ethiopians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, and last, though not least, the Christians, are worshippers of the Sun under the form of a man. Christian priests, while denouncing the worship of Atys, Adonis, Bacchus, Mithra, and Hercules, as the worship of idols, have been too ignorant of their own religion, and the source from whence it was derived, to know that the god Chrishna, the black god of India and Ethiopia, was a mere personification of light ; that Chrishna was among those nations worshipped as the light which enlightens every man coming into the world,—precisely as Christ is worshipped as the light

which enlighteneth every man coming into the world ; that the Sun, the great fountain of light, was personified by Chrishna in the countries before mentioned, who was said to have been born of a virgin, differing only from the orthodox Virgin Mary, in being black ; because, as before noted, when blacks personify, they personify in their own manner,—there being no standard of excellence or beauty, but each nation or people setting up one of their own, purely arbitrary, delightful enough to themselves—but often ugly and detestable to others. Had all men been black, we should undoubtedly have heard of nought but sooty gods, angels, and superior intelligences ; for, as observed by a witty philosopher,—“ If God has made men after his own image, men have not failed to return the compliment, and made God, or gods, after their own image.” The Chrishna of India was the same as the Hercules of Egypt and Phenecia, the Mithra of Persia, the Bacchus of Greece, and the Christ of Europe,—that is, neither more nor less than a personified idea of the strength, virtue, and grandeur of the glorious Star of Day ; in short, as we asserted in our second Letter,—a Mythos ! Proofs of this will thicken upon us at every step, and in our next we shall pluck *another* feather from the wing of the orthodox Christian, by shewing that the supposed birth of Christ on Christmas day, was the birth of the Sun, or the winter solstice. It will also be made manifest, not merely that the festival of Christmas had its origin in the heavenly appearances, but in fact, that *all* religious worship, ceremonies, fêtes, and festivals, bore a relation to heavenly phenomena, and the effects such phenomena produced on the destinies of men.

This was the origin of the fêtes and rejoicings at Christmas, or the solstice of winter and Easter, or the equinox of spring, by the worshippers of Christ, or the Sun ; but though many rejoice—few inquire. The true cause of such fêtes and festivals, was unknown, except to the instructed. The ancient priests were well informed respecting these things, but modern priests, bewildered by dogmas, know nothing of their origin. May-day sports, as well as those of Christmas and Easter, were first enjoyed in ancient times, and were always meant to celebrate certain natural events.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED !

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 10.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The dogma, so long and strenuously insisted upon by the *knowing* among the nations—that opinions which affect religion, or in anywise concern our eternal salvation, it is good to receive without question, or examination, as a sacred heritage—a divine gift, of which priests are the donors, too sacred and too divine to be searched or sought into—has lost much of its dominion over the minds of men; who, since they learned to reason, have discovered that such a dogma was both mischievous and absurd, tending more than any other to perpetuate delusion, and make of religion, which ought to find its support in the sublimest speculations, “a mere rhapsody of words,” a jargon most discordant and confused, that, instead of exciting the tenderest sympathies of human nature, and giving birth to actions generous and noble, fill weak-minded men with a fanatical and most unjust hatred of each other. The teachers of religion *ought to be* the most meek, the most humble, loving, charitable, and disinterested of men—shewing examples of virtue and probity—promoters of peace and good-will among mankind, the terror of the evil-doer, the champions of the weak, lovers of the sciences and the arts; they *should* be stimulators and directors—not deadeners and checkers, of the spirit of inquiry, and by their conduct leave no

room for men to say, "Ye are forgers of lies ; ye are all physicians of no value ;" to which they sometimes, in very bitterness of spirit, add, when they see religion converted into an engine of despotism, and its teachers the faithful allies of the spoilers, "The tabernacle of robbers prospers : and they that provoke God are secure ; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly."

Is it not true, that "a righteous man hateth lying ; but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame ?" No orthodox divine will say nay to this ; but it must be evident that the man, be he king, priest, or legislator, who teaches, or causes to be taught, that it is good to believe, and bad to examine, is an unrighteous man, for he loveth lying ; for what is error but a lie,—which it is only necessary to know as such, when it will receive its death-blow. Error is only supported because men think it good—falsehood always wears the mask of truth ; but dabblers in human credulity, who go to market with their cunning, seldom fail to find a purchaser for the wares they carry—for with traffickers in opinion, what matters who buys, so that they sell ; or who loses, so that they gain : they know that to make others as cunning as themselves would be to break up their holy and profitable monopoly ; and hence it is, that quacks, theological and political, determinedly oppose any inroads upon ancient theology, or ancient kind of government. No, no ; they stand upon the ancient ways, and say they have a *prescriptive right* to torture both body and soul. The theologian loves the good old times, and the good old things—once so well enjoyed, when there was no hubbub about rights of conscience or liberty of speech ; but all was smooth, oily, and harmonious ; when the glory of the church of Christ blazed forth amid the darkness of the people ; when it was duly taught, and duly believed, too, that "the fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion ; whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul." We need not be surprised that the human heart was essentially corrupt, and all the thoughts of the mind evil continually, when such orthodox dogmas were given forth from our pulpits by holy men—most eloquent divines—whose wits were sharpened by the desire of court favour and good livings in perspective. How could the hearers of such inspired preachers be calm under their exciting influence ? Can we wonder that their hearts burned within them when the Scripture was opened to them by men who knew that "the king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion, but his favour is as dew upon the grass !" and seeing

that "wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour;" they did, not having the fear of poverty before their eyes, preach to their dupes the *excellence* of poverty, as that which chasteneth us—turneth our thoughts towards heaven; while they piously did keep the wealth for themselves. Verily, this was the generation "whose teeth were as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men."

What but the influence of such godly ravings could have so long bewildered the people, and kept them in the mazes of error, the worse than Cretan labyrinth of Christian mysticism; but alas! the credulity of the people is as a rich mine that each knave thinks he has a right to dig into; and the priests early saw that if they would maintain their power, they must oppose every species of knowledge, except that particular kind of knowledge they wished to give. They supported error, because error supported them; and of this we may be sure, that as long as men profit by error it will not want champions. This is the grand secret; here we have the true cause why the opinions of one generation are adopted as infallible by the next; sacred truths, to doubt which, is sinful and unholy, injurious to public morals, and opposed to the glory of God!" Seneca finely observes, "that plurality of voices is still an argument of the wrong; the common people find it easier to believe than to judge, and content themselves with what is usual, never examining whether it be good or no. By the common people is intended the man of title, as well as the clown; for we do not distinguish them by the eye, but by the mind, which is the proper judge of the mind."

Men wise in crooked policy, who prefer ease to honesty, before they write or speak, feel the pulse of those they profess to teach. Sounding opinion from its lowest note to the top of its compass, and understanding the sharps and flats of discourse, they chime in most harmoniously with the voice of the age, or speak not at all, sheltering themselves under the wise maxim, "He that hath knowledge spareth his words; and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit;" but there are others, who, not knowing how to write, so as to get readers, or to talk with the slightest prospect of getting ears that *will* hear, do make a virtue of necessity, and stammer out their opinion—that the world will be best reformed by saying nothing—by preserving a dignified silence. These people should

have been born before the flood. They hold the sage maxim that the mind is better improved by thought and meditation than by talking; besides, our great men of the present day, who are reputed wise for saying nothing, have Solomon to back them, who observes, that "even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding."

It is much to be lamented, that the human mind should be clogged and fettered by those who are set apart to teach truths, and should teach them; but alas! it is but too true, as said by Fletcher, the celebrated divine, that "there is not a pulpit in the kingdom where more has not been said *for* sin than *against* it:" and yet such preachers are orthodox, forsooth,—that is, fall in with the most common, and therefore the most profitable opinions. Oh, how strange, that while aucient philosophers are honoured as something more than men, and permitted to occupy a niche in the temple of fame, their teachings are set at nought. Socrates, though a Pagan, is little less than deified by all but the most bigotted—that is to say, the least instructed Christians; yet Socrates was not satisfied to believe, but taught the necessity of searching and probing into Nature, so as, if possible, to pluck out the heart of her mystery. Yes, Socrates is considered one of the wisest of mortals, though his orthodoxy was of a most questionable and crazy kind; nor were his opinions found to be of the right length, breadth, and thickness, when measured by the foot-rule of bigots. And to his cost he discovered that "a stone is heavy and the sand weighty, but a fool's wrath is heavier than both."

How, in the name of reason, shall we understand the genius of the ancient priests and poets,—how get at the spirit of their works, except by persevering industry, aided and supported by an ardent love of truth. How important, for example, it is that all Christians should know that in former ages, when priests were at once the teachers and the rulers of the people, their guides and their protectors, Nature's phenomena was only observed by them; all learning was then concentrated in the religious temples; the priests were the historians; all books were written by priests—in short, human condition was in former times, entirely prescribed by priests. But what is perhaps of more importance to know, their histories were histories of nature, not histories of men; and in their sacred books their custom was to put in action all the intelligences they sup-

posed to be spread throughout the universe,—giving them a character and manners analogous to their supposed nature ; making of the Sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, the elements, &c., so many heroes, angels, or deities, each playing his or her part in their poetical fictions, and religious chants ; as all know who have read the poems which treat of the works and wonders of Bacchus, of Jason, of Osiris, of Theseus, of Hercules, of Christ.

This custom of the ancient priests to personify natural phenomena, gave birth to idolatry, its absurdities, and cruelties, and the error was so much the more easily credited as the priests relaxed not in their efforts to persuade the people that the gods they adored had really lived and performed the extraordinary feats related of them ; that they were *bona-fide* men, princes, legislators, and the like, who, when on earth, were as Hercules, the terror of the guilty, and the shield of the innocent.

The people in former times, like our friends and neighbours of the present moment, were not in general very solicitous to search into the real merits of such recitals, but were well content to be led, if always fed at the same time ; a neglect of the latter condition makes the task of leading rather difficult ; and it may be true that the ancient priests, or teachers of mankind, were prompted to act by the best possible motives when they gave currency to pious frauds, and taught that the gods worshipped by their devotees, had formerly resided upon the earth—been examples of virtue, truthfulness, bravery, and honour—thereby worthy of deification—leading the people to admire those virtues, and thus set in motion the springs of imitation ; there being a natural tendency in men to aim at achieving those acts which they admire when performed by others ; besides, such stories, they probably thought, would have the effect of stimulating the ardour for good deeds, which otherwise would have lain dormant in the breasts of the chiefs and leaders of the people ; or it may be, that the priests connived at the cheat, with a view to excite, in the minds of the people, a love of virtue, by teaching them that great actions would ensure great rewards,—not merely on earth, but in heaven,—and that it was great and noble deeds which gave their forefathers a claim to wield the sceptre of their country, which was ever the reward of merit—not the patrimony of individuals.

A comparison of the ancient calendar, with the works said to have been performed by Hercules, will throw a strong light upon

this subject. The Phenecians had a tradition that Hercules was the god Sun—that magnificent star which vivifies all nature—which engenders the year, composed of twelve months, figured by the twelve works called the twelve works of Hercules. We are informed by Porphry, that Hercules was a personification of the Sun, and that the fable of the twelve works merely expressed, and did convey, the idea to the learned, of the apparent march of that star through the twelve signs of the zodiac. Hesiod informs us, that the zodiac, in which the Sun achieves his annual course, is the veritable career run through by Hercules in the fable of the twelve works; and that by his marriage with Hebe, goddess of youth, that he espouses after finishing his career, we are to understand, the year which renews itself at the end of each revolution.

The celebrated ancient poet Nonus, gives to Hercules the name of Helios, or Sun, and further says, that he is the same god that divers people adore under a host of different names—as Belus upon the shores of the Euphrates, Ammon in Lybia, Apis in Memphis, Saturn in Arabia, Jupiter in Assyria, Serapis in Egypt, Helios with the Babylonians, Apollo at Delphi, and Esculapius in all Greece.

A comparison, that we here challenge all readers to make between the said works of Hercules and the works of the Sun during the twelve months, or with the signs and the constellations which mark the division of time during each month of the annual revolution, will set all doubt as to the mythological character of Hercules—for ever at rest.

If the story told of Hercules be a solar fable, instead of, as is generally supposed, a matter of fact,—if the hero of the twelve works, to whom the Greeks attributed so many marvellous actions, and that they honoured, under the form of a hero invested with the skin of a lion, and armed with an enormous club, is the great god Sun, worshipped by all people,—we shall know how to estimate what are called “the historical proofs of his existence.” In various countries they *prove* the existence of Hercules by shewing what they are pleased to call the marks or traces of his footsteps, which plainly indicate, say they, that he must have been a man of colossal stature. The priests attached to his worship have conserved correct likenesses of Hercules, as the Christians have of their god Christ. Dr. Arnott has felt annoyed that the features of Christ had been borrowed from handsome persons of but questionable cele-

brity, and gravely says,* that "It can produce no pleasing impression on a Christian's mind to be told, that an admired painting of the crucifixion was made chiefly from the body of an executed murderer (!), or that, for a praised representation of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the painter had deemed his own physiognomy the most befitting for the principal figure, while he copied the portrait of a noted modern sceptic as a specimen of the bad men—of an equally noted believer as a specimen of the good,—while wives, cousins, acquaintances, and old clothes men, served to make up the remaining groups." What a pity the apostles did not look to this, and, as they had the gift of tongues and the power of the holy-ghost upon them, have taken care to leave us a correct portrait, and thereby rendered it unnecessary for orthodox artists to look out for an executed murderer (as the above *Christian* writer asserts) in order to find a set of features to convey his idea of Christ nailed upon the cross!!

Again, Hercules is represented as strong and nervous, with an aquiline nose, dark, glossy hair, and showing signs of the most robust health. He was styled the universal benefactor of the world—so was Christ; the one was invested with the skin of the lion, the emblem of the solstitial lion, or lion of the constellations, and Christ took that of the equinoxial lamb, or the lamb of spring, which repairs the evil of the world; but the god Sun will not escape us under this flimsy disguise, and the lion of the tribe of Judah will be no less the Sun, which has its domicile at the sign of the celestial lion, and its exaltation in that of the lamb or ram of spring. This, no Christian will have the rashness to deny, after having read the account of ancient festivals published in the two following Letters, where the truth is established that the god of the Christian sect is the star which regenerates nature every year at the moment of the celebration of Easter.

Who after having compared the ancient calendar with the fabled works of Hercules, will care one straw what is said by historians about the existence of a valiant hero called Hercules; in vain will people shew in Italy, in Greece, in Egypt, or in Phenecia, towns that he had founded, canals that he formed, rocks that he had separated, columns that he had raised, or the stones which Jupiter is said to have thrown from heaven to assist him in his conflict against the Liguriens,—in vain will the temples, the statues, the

* In his "Elements of Physics," part 1, page 218, vol. 2.

altars, the fêtes, the solemn sports, the hymns, the sacred traditions spread over half the world, be referred to as proofs that he really existed; the comparison of the reputed actions of a man called Hercules, with the ancient calendar, will scatter such flimsy evidence to the wind. We have in our possession a copy of this curious calendar, and shall publish it in a future number, when every reader will be enabled to judge for himself, and see to what point it harmonises with the poetic fiction. There is not, we feel assured, a single Christian reader who, after comparing the calendar with the fictional history, will not exclaim—"Well, it is clear, all that has been written about the wonderful Greek prince, called Hercules, is mere fiction, and relates to the Sun;" but how will those same Christian readers be startled, but we hope not dismayed, to find, that what is written about Christ is equally a poetic fiction—that Christ no more existed than did Hercules,—that, in fact, *Christ has been worshipped ever since men worshipped the Sun*—that himself and his twelve apostles, the chief of whom has all the attributes of Janus, bear a relation, or rather, owe their existence to the Sun and the signs of the zodiac through which it annually passes. It will be idle for Christians to declare that the tomb of Christ is to be seen even now at Jerusalem; so may that of Hercules be seen at Cadiz; and those of Bacchus and Jupiter in Greece; and if, as historians tell us, Christ was born at Jerusalem, they with equal plausibility inform us that Hercules was born at Thebes, as well as Bacchus, son of Semele, an ancient hero, who, on account of his glorious conquests, was placed in the rank of the gods. Again we repeat that in former times it was customary to write the history of nature and its phenomena, as we now write that of men; and that the Sun was everywhere the hero of these marvellous romances. If the reader admit this truth, he will also, without difficulty, admit our explanation of the solar legend, known among the Christians under the name of the life of Christ,—which is but one of a thousand names for the Sun, whatever may be the opinion of his worshippers.

In every nation the credulous and the *knowing* shew the tombs of their great and little gods to the generally *incredulous* traveller; everywhere are fêtes celebrated, and doleful lamentations uttered, the end of which seemed to be the renewal, every year, of the sorrow the loss of their gods had occasioned.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 11.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

Herodotus, the celebrated Greek historian, who had travelled long in Egypt, carefully collecting the sacred traditions of that ancient nation, and made himself familiar with the rites, ceremonies, manners, and customs of that learned people, assures us that not merely was Osiris (or the Sun honoured under that name) worshipped by the Egyptians as a living God (the same Deity as that to which temples and alters were raised in Greece under the name of Bacchus), but that they likewise appropriated to themselves all the other gods worshipped upon the soil of Egypt, and faithfully copied their forms, ceremonies, fêtes, and mysteries; in short, the superstitions of Egypt were transplanted to Greece, from Greece to Rome, and are now spread over all Europe. The spirit of imitation is national, as well as individual; and we find in Herodotus that if Egypt had its initiations, known under the name of mysteries of Osiris and of Isis, the Greeks had also theirs under the name of Bacchus; a short account of which mysteries may be useful and instructive—useful as shewing the causes why certain days were set apart as festivals (for the mysteries were festivals of a splendid character)—and instructive as proving that in the early ages of the world all festivals owed their existence to the appearance of some remarkable natural phenomena.

The mysteries of Eleusis were celebrated with much magnificence by the Roman people ; and the great orator Cicero, one of the noblest of men, speaks of them as fêtes most useful to humanity, for, observes he, “ their effect has been to civilize societies, soften men’s hearts, and humanize their manners, making men who would else be savage and ferocious, civilized—penetrates them with a love of their fellow-creatures, and leads them to a knowledge of the true moral principles, which can alone lead men to those practices which are worthy of them.” So thought Cicero ; and such was the opinion of the greatest philosophers of his time, who gave currency to the fable that Orpheus, whose delicious music subdued the cruel rage of lions and tigers, and touched the sensibilities of trees and rocks by the harmonious accents of his lyre, was the god who first carried into Greece the mysteries of Bacchus,—and as the mysteries had for their end the support of social order, justice, and religion, in the system of those who only hoped to support the one by the other, Orpheus received much of honour. This double end is enclosed in the verse of Virgil,—

“ Learn of me to respect justice and the gods.”

And such was the grand lesson given by the priest to those who were initiated and allowed the privilege of taking part in the mysteries. Modern festivals and rejoicings are all of a meagre character. Our Christmas and our Easter fêtes, and our May-day sports are fast sinking into oblivion, and people are travelling towards the conviction that no one day is more holy or preferable to another ; but it was not so with the ancients, who imprinted a supernatural character upon their legislation ; and in their religious temples the people were taught the duty they owed to each other, and their duty to the gods. Mythological poetry furnished to the legislators of those times the subject of scenes as astonishing as varied—as interesting as magnificent, which dazzled the eyes of all beholders. In the temples of Egypt, of Asia, and of Greece, all that illusion could effect—all the resources of mechanism and of magic (which is nothing more than the knowledge of the secret effects of nature, and the mastery of that art which enables us to imitate them), the brilliant pomp of the fêtes, the variety and splendour of the decorations, the rich vestments, the majesty of the ceremonial, the grace of those who took part, the enchanting force of the music, the chorus, the songs, the dances, all imitative of the motions of the planets, the sound of the symbols, so well calculated to excite en-

thusiasm, and even delirium, always more favourable to such religions than the calmness and placidity of reason,—all these were employed to draw and attach the people to the celebration of the mysteries under the mask of a not-to-be resisted pleasure; the joy and the dance concealed the design that the honest priests had to give useful lessons, they treating the people as children that we never instruct half so well as when we seem to have no other object in view than to amuse them. Upon these grand occasions not only was the universe exposed to the view of the initiated, under the form of an egg, but the principal divisions of nature were traced thereupon, and an explanation given of the cause active and the cause passive, into which they divided all causation,—likewise explaining the two principles of light and of darkness, of good and of evil. In some of their mysteries they exposed the generative organs of the two sexes. It was the same with the Indians, who had their Lingam; but space forbids us to pursue this truly interesting subject further at present, than to say that Herodotus writes at some length respecting the similitude between the ceremonial of the Phallepore, or the Festival of Generation, which was formerly celebrated with much pomp in Egypt in honour of Osiris, and that in Greece in honour of Bacchus. That the people called Phoenecians, Indians, Ethiopians, Egyptians, and others, had at stated seasons ceremonies, fêtes, sometimes joyful, sometimes full of lamentations, in honour of their gods, is now matter of common knowledge; but that all modern fêtes, rejoicings, feastings, and lamentations, were borrowed from the ancients, and had one only source, is not so generally known. The April fooleries are fast going out of fashion. The ancients had many rites and ceremonies in honour of their gods. The Romans kept their Saturnalia in honour of Saturn, beginning on the 17th of December, which lasted during five days. Bocharius is of opinion, that they took their origin from Noah's drunkenness. These were times when all business ceased, except cooking; when servants might command their masters, and slaves become unruly without fear of punishment. The Bacchanalia, or feasts in honour of Bacchus, lasted three days, and commenced after the vine harvests, and then drunkenness was the privilege of all. The Stultinaria were confined to one day, the 1st of April, when the idiots had their annual holiday, and when children were encouraged to make derision of them, and send them on needless errands, &c. Some writers are of opinion that the Romans had much policy in allow-

ing these feasts or holidays. By the first, they saw how servants and slaves would act, had they power. By the second, they were able to discover the natural inclinations and vices of all that inebriated themselves. And the encouragement they gave to the children, in the third instance, to deride the fools, would, they hoped, make them desirous to receive their education, lest they might in time become themselves the objects of contempt.

To bring the custom nearer to our own times, if any of the old accounts of London are looked into, it will be seen, that when Bedlam was first built and endowed, there was a part appropriated for the reception of idiots. They were designated by the title of *Abraham men*, because that was the name of the ward in which they were confined. On the first of April, such as were not too far incapacitated had a holiday to see their friends; such as had not any, begged about the streets. They wore the dress of the hospital, and excited the compassion of many, on account of the game made of them by the vulgar, and children, who knew no better; which induced numbers of vagrants to imitate the dress, and pretend idiotism, till an order was issued from the governors, that if any person should *sham* an *Abraham*, he should be whipped and put in the stocks; from whence came the saying of "*Shamming an Abraham.*"

Tertullien, the celebrated apologist of the Christian system, agrees, that when that religion passed to the West, enlightened men who examined it, gave as their opinion that the Christians were but sectaries of the religion of Mithra, and that their god was the same god as that worshipped by the Persians. It will be useful here to note, that in the practices of the Christians, we see the not-to-be-mistaken marks of their origin; for example, the Christians never pray without turning themselves towards the East, or towards that part of the world where the Sun rises. All the Christian temples, all their places of worship, were anciently turned towards the rising Sun. The day of festivity which, however, has of late by canting hypocrites been converted into a day of gloom, called the seventh day, answers to the day of the Sun, and is called *Sun-day*, or day of the Lord Sun. The ancients used to call Sunday the day of the Sun.

The Manicheans, whose religion was a strange compound of Christianity and Magism, always turned themselves, when in the act of praying, towards the East. Zoroastre has given the same

instructions to his disciples ; also the Manicheans, who do not appear to have lost the thread which connects the Christian religion with that of the Persians, with regard to the two principles, and with respect to the Sun Mithra, of whom Christ is a copy, stoutly contended, as we contend, that Christ is the Sun ; but they seemed to suppose that the Sun really contained a man or god called Christ, in the same manner that the ancients placed Apollo and Hercules in that planet. All this is attested by Theoderet, Saint Cyrille, and St Leon. This without doubt was the cause why the other Christians were so angry with the Manicheans—pluming themselves upon being the best believers, that is, the most ignorant ; nor would they in their wrath admit the Manicheans to their communion until they consented to abjure their heresy, and give up the pernicious dogma of their religion, which consisted in believing that Christ and the Sun *were the same thing*—at all events, that he had *no existence out of that star*. There are, *even now*, in the East, two sects of *Christians* adorers of the Sun. The Basilidiens and the Gnostics were two of the most learned, and at the same time, the *most ancient* professors of that religion, which only needs an examination to be convinced that it had its origin in solar worship. They gave to their Christ the name of Iao, the same name that the oracle of Claros, according to the most learned ancient authors, gives to the Sun ; in fine, so much of conformity had Christianity with the worship of the Sun, that the Emperor Adrian called the followers of Christ the worshippers of Serapis, that is to say, of the Sun ; for Serapis was the same as Osiris ; and the ancient medals which bear the features of the god Serapis have inscribed upon them the legend Sun Serapis. This will clearly shew that there is nothing novel about the opinion that Christ was a personification of the Sun, and that all his worshippers are, like the Persians, the worshippers of fire ; so that, if what we assert seem paradoxical, at least it is not new,—and will doubtless, on that account, appear more respectable in the eyes of the moral antiquary, who would not give one brass farthing for an opinion if it were not at least a thousand years old, and wearing upon its face the rust of many ages.

It was a fundamental point of all religions which had the worship of the Sun for their basis, to treat of its birth, death, and resurrection, and to retrace, or, as it were, record those events by religious ceremonies and sacred legends,—hence it was that tombs were raised to the divinity of the Sun, under different names, and to

commemorate its death and resurrection; a vast number of which may now be seen in Egypt. Hercules had his at Cadiz, where his bones were formerly seen, and, as before said, Jupiter and Bacchus had theirs in Greece. The priests of Delphi used to shew the tomb of Apollo; and the tomb of Christ is now shewn to credulous pilgrims in Jerusalem. Three females, it is related, went to shed their tears upon the tomb of Apollo, after the serpent Python had put him to death, as the three females that we are told with equal truth, went to wet with their tears the tomb of Christ. Apollo took the title of Saviour—so did Christ. At Athens and Sparta were celebrated, in honour of Apollo, fêtes of joy at the full-moon of spring,—for the grand festival of Easter is fixed, as all our readers probably know, exactly at the same time. Easter is a time of rejoicing over by far the largest portion of the earth. The fête, the most solemn and grand, of the Tartars, is the *Joun*, or that of spring; also the grand festival of the Calmucs falls at the first moon of April; they call that first day equinoxial, and the fête itself *white-day*. Everywhere in Greece it was customary to celebrate fêtes in honour of the Sun, or god of Spring, vanquisher of winter and the great serpent Python; and these fêtes were called fêtes of felicitation—rejoicings for their safety and wonderful deliverance from the devil, or powers of cold and of darkness.

Christ is called by his followers the Lamb who repairs the evils of the world,—which symbolical expression requires some explanation. In the mysterious book called the Apocolypse, we read of the slaughtered Lamb, worthy to receive wisdom, honour, divinity, glory, and benedictions. It is the Lamb which opens the book of fate, designed under the emblem of the book with seven seals. All the nations of the earth are represented as placing themselves before the throne of the Lamb,—they are clothed in white, with palms in their hands, and chanting with loud voices—glory to our god, who is seated upon the throne. It would be superfluous, if not tedious, to multiply passages in which that mysterious name is repeated,—but all who are curious can examine the matter further by referring to the Apocolypse, where they will see that the god of Light was *the* Christ under the name of the Lamb—that grand divinity to which the Christians consecrated themselves in their initiation. The festival of Easter, therefore, simply relates to the god Sun, in its triumph at the vernal equinox, when it takes the form of the first sign, or constellation, called the celestial Lamb, when

that majestic star, seeming to triumph over the spirit of darkness, and bring back to our hemisphere the long days, its appearance was annually hailed with delight and gratitude ; this was the origin of the festival of Easter, and this and this only was the Lamb that came to save the sins of the world. No wonder that men should have worshipped the Lamb, when its appearance in the heavens was the signal for the enjoyment of all the blessings that the presence of the Sun can diffuse ; nor shall we be surprised, moreover, to find that the figure of the Lamb was the character or seal with which the priests formerly marked the professors of that religion, or that the early Christians placed around the neck of their children—the symbolical image of the Lamb. Who has not heard of the famous *Agnus dei* ?

The most ancient representation of the god of the Christians was the figure of a Lamb, sometimes united to a vase, in which its blood flowed, sometimes sleeping at the foot of a cross. That custom subsisted until the year 680, but it was ordained by the sixteenth synod of Constantinople (canon 82) that in place of the ancient symbol, which was the Lamb, they should in future represent a man attached to a cross, which policy was confirmed by Pope Adrian I. In our churches may be seen this symbol, upon the tabernacle or little press, in which the priests enclose the sun of gold or silver that contains the circular image of the god Sun, as well as in front of their altars. The Lamb is there often represented sleeping, sometimes upon a cross, sometimes upon the book of fate, which is closed with seven seals. That number seven is that of the spheres, of which the Sun was reputed by ancient mystagogues to be the soul, and of which the motion or revolution is reckoned from the point of Aries, or the Lamb of the equinox. This is the Lamb that the Christians tell us was immolated from the beginning of the world. *Agnus oecius ab origine mundi*. It would fill a folio to enumerate one tithe of the fêtes and rejoicings practised among the ancients at Easter in celebration of the victory obtained by the Lamb, or the god Sun, over the devil, or god of darkness. Hence the origin of lighting wax tapers, known under the name of paschal tapers, as symbolical of the triumph of light. It is at Easter that the Persian priests clothe themselves in white, the colour affected to Ormusd, or the god of Light. The festival of Easter was also celebrated in Egypt under Aries, or the Lamb, in gratitude that the light of the heavens had trampled over the genius of evil,—in which

fête all is red, or the colour of fire, as in the Easter fête of the Jews—their fête of the Lamb. That resurrection of the eternal fire, which the ancients supposed bubbled or boiled in the Sun, and which every spring returns to render vitality and joy to our hemisphere, was the true and only resurrection of Christ. It was this idea that led the Bishop of Jerusalem every year to shut himself up in a little cave, called the tomb of Christ, and carry with him a bundle of small wax candles, and by the aid of flint and steel contrive to produce an explosion of light, such as that to be seen at the body of the Opera, in order that the people might believe that sacred fire had fallen from the heavens to the earth, which they readily did. Then the worthy bishop had the second part of the farce to play, and ran out crying lustily that the fire from heaven had descended, and the holy wax candles were illumined by it, and the open-mouthed multitude ran in crowds to buy his holy wax candles; for in Jerusalem, as elsewhere, the priests sell holy things, and the people purchase them,—the more silly the latter, the richer the former,—everywhere the people are duped out of their substance, and where dupes are, dupers will be.

The reason why the name of Lamb has been given to Christ, and that the latter has been in so many nations worshipped under that emblem, is because that Christ is the Sun, and that the triumph of the Sun is gained every year, under the sign of the Lamb, or under that sign which was then the first of the twelve signs, when happened the equinox of spring. The mysteries of Atys lasted three days; these days were days of mourning, and that fête of the Sun Atys fell on the 25th of March, or the eighth day before the kalends of April, that is to say, it fell upon the same day that the Christians ordinarily celebrate their Easter, or the triumph of Christ, when they chaunt Hallelujah, the true chaunt of joy of the *Hilaries*, or days of joy; indeed, there is not the slightest difference between these two fêtes, those of Atys god Sun of the Phrygia, and Christ the god Sun of the Christians, only in the name of the hero of the tragedy, who in both fables is reputed to have done precisely the same acts. In our next we shall conclude our remarks on the origin of Christmas and Easter Festivals, and in the following Letter will publish, according to promise, the ancient Calendar, and compare it with the twelve works of Hercules.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED !

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 12.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The Sun neither rises nor sets in reality—it is in itself ever the same,—always majestic, always brilliant; but in the relation the days have with the nights, there is in the world a progressive gradation, of increase and of decrease, which phenomena have given birth to ingenious fictions on the part of ancient theologians. They have likened the birth and the apparent growth and decay of the Sun, to that of a man who is born, grows, and, after having attained the age of maturity, degenerates or decreases in force, until he arrives at last at the term or end of the career that Nature has enabled him to run through. The god of day, or the Sun, personified in the sacred allegories, was reputed to have suffered the destiny of man; he had his cradle and his grave, under the names of Hercules, of Atys, of Adonis, Bacchus, Osiris, or Christ. He was a child at the solstice of winter, or at the moment when the days began to lengthen, and it is under that form that the Sun's image was formerly exposed in the ancient temples, there to receive the homage of his adorers; because, according to Macrobe, "the day being then the most short, the god Sun seemed to be as a feeble infant. It is the child of the mysteries—that same infant that the Egyptians drew the image of from their sanctuaries every year upon a day appointed."

It is that same child of whom the goddess of Sais called herself the mother. In the inscription to be found upon the celebrated ancient temple erected to her honour, might be seen these words—"The fruit that I have brought forth is the Sun." It is that child, feeble and weak, born in the middle of obscure night, of which the holy virgin of Sais was delivered at the solstice of winter,—according to Plutarchus.

The Sun god had his mysteries and his altars, and statues were raised which represented him in the four ages of human life; nor were the Egyptians the only people who celebrated at the winter solstice the birth of the Sun—of that star which every year seems to triumph over darkness and death. The Romans had on a day fixed their grand fête of the Sun, when they celebrated solar sports, known under the name of sports of the circus. They fixed it on the eighth day before the kalends of January, that is to say, on that day which answers to our 25th of December, or to the birth of the Sun, adored under the names Mithra, Christ, &c. This is shewn in a calender printed in the Uranology of the celebrated Petean, where we read, that "On the eighth day before the kalends of January, *natalis invicti*, or birth of the invincible." That invincible was Mithra, or the Sun. "We celebrate," said Julian the philosopher, "some days before the day of the year, magnificent sports in honour of the Sun, to which has been given the title of Invincible." The same epithet, as before stated in one of these Letters, is to be found upon all the monuments of the Mithriac religion, and is applied to Mithra, or to the Sun, the great divinity of the Persians,—their great god Sun, the invincible Mithra.

In the sphere of the Magi and the Chaldean priests was represented in the sky, a newly-born infant, called Christ, or Jesus, placed in the arms of the celestial virgin, that is, the virgin of the signs, to which some philosophers have given the name of Isis, mother of Horus. And at what point of the heavens did that virgin and her son answer? (Let every Christian note this well.) It was at the hour of midnight, on the 25th of December, at the very same instant when the god of the year, the Christ, is said to have been born, and at that very point where the Sun seemed to rise on the first day above the eastern horizon.

To this fact we call the attention of all who are willing to be convinced, as it is of vast importance; it is a fact independent of all mere hypothesis—independent of all conclusions we may draw from it—that at the precise hour of midnight, on the

25th of December, in the ages when Christianity appeared,—the celestial sign which then appeared above the horizon, and of which the ascendant presided at what astronomers call the opening of the solar revolution,—was the virgin of the constellations. It is also a fact, that the god Sun, born at the solstice of winter, that is, the 25th of December, is re-united to the virgin, and seems to envelope her with his fires at the epoch of our grand fête of the assumption, or the re-union of the mother with her son, and that she seems to go out from the solar rays heliaquement, at the very moment when the Christians celebrate his appearance in the world, or his nativity.

These are facts which cannot be abused away ; nor do we doubt that they will produce great and lasting effects upon the minds of all candid readers. No reasoning, however sophistical, can set such evidence aside ; but the attentive observer, who has the least acquaintance with the genius of the ancient writers and teachers, will draw from them consequences of vast importance, unless they can suppose that all these things are merely accidental—mere matters of chance,—this, however, few will do who are on their guard against all that is likely to mislead their reason, and perpetuate their prejudices. One thing is certain, which is, that the same virgin—that virgin which can alone become a mother without ceasing to be a virgin—fulfilled the three grand functions of the virgin mother of Christ, whether in the birth of her son, in her own birth, or her re-union to him in the heavens ; but it is, above all, in her function of mother that we shall examine her here. It is natural to think that those who personified the Sun, and made him pass through the different ages of human life—who attributed to him marvellous adventures, which they chanted in poems, or related in their sacred legends—would not fail to draw his horoscope, as it was the custom to draw the horoscope of other children at the moment of their birth. That usage was, above all, that of the Chaldeans and the Persians ; and such fêtes were celebrated under the name of *dies natalis*, or fête of the birth. But the celestial virgin which presided at the birth of the god Day personified, was reputed to be his mother, and fulfilled the prophecy of the astrologer who had said, “ A virgin will conceive and bring forth,” that is to say, that she will bear or bring forth the god Sun, as the virgin Sais ; hence the designs traced in the sphere of the Magi, of which Abulmazar has given us a description, and of which also, Albert the Grand, Roger Bacon, Selden, Kirker, and others, have

written. Abulmazar says, "In the first decan, or in the first ten degrees of the sign of the virgin, according to the traditions of the most ancient Persians, of the Chaldeans, of the Egyptians, of Hermes, and of Esculapius, is a young girl, called in the Persian language Seclenidos de Daryama, a name translated into Arabic by that of Adrenedefa, that is to say, a virgin chaste, pure, immaculate, with a delightful figure, sweet and most agreeable features, with long flowing hair, and a modest air; she holds in her hand two ears of corn, she is seated upon a throne, she nourishes and gives suck to a young infant, that some call Jesus, and the Greeks Christ." The sphere of the Magi, or Persian priests, published by the learned Scaliger, at the end of his notes upon Manillius, describes, in nearly the same manner, the celestial virgin; but he does not name the infant which is milked, or receives support from the virgin; and placed by her side is a man who can be no other than Bootes, called the nourisher of the Sun, and of the virgin Isis.

In the Bibliotheque national of France might formerly be seen an Arab manuscript which contained the twelve signs designed and illuminated, and there was represented a young child by the side of the celestial virgin, as nearly as possible like our representations of the virgin and son, and as the Egyptian Isis with her son. It seems probable that the ancient astrologers would have placed in the sky the infantine image of the new Sun in the constellation which presided at the re-rising, or that of the new year, the solstice of winter, from which simple root have sprung up all the fictions about a god conceived in the chaste womb of a virgin, since that constellation was really the virgin. That conclusion is surely more probable and therefore more sensible than the fanciful notion which many simple and not a few cunning fanatics so obstinately believe, or pretend they believe, that there did once exist a woman called Mary, who became a mother without ceasing to be a virgin, and that the fruit which she brought forth is an eternal being that moves and rules all nature. The Greeks said of their god, worshipped under the form of a ram or a lamb, the famous Ammon or Jupiter, that he was nurtured by Themis, one of the names of the constellations; she was also called Ceres, to whom the epithet Holy Virgin was applied, and was said to be the mother of the young Bacchus, or of the Sun; the image of which, with all the traits of infancy, was annually exposed at the solstice of winter in the holy temples or sanctuaries. The author of the *Chronicles of Alexandria* expresses himself in these terms, "the Egyptians have

up to this day consecrated the *couche* (lying-in) of a virgin and the birth of her son, that it is customary to expose in a cradle to the adoration of the people. The great king Ptolemy having demanded the reason of that usage, he was answered that it was a mystery taught to their Egyptian forefathers by a great prophet. It may be well to add, that with the Egyptians the term prophet meant simply a chief of the initiations.

It is contended by many learned authors that the ancient Druids rendered honours to a virgin, and that her statue was formerly in the territory of Chartres, with this inscription—*Virgini pariturae*. It is certain that on the monuments erected to Mithra, or the Sun, of which the worship was formerly established in Great Britain, might be seen the figure of a woman with an infant sucking at her breast, which doubtless represents the mother of the god Sun. An English author who wrote a dissertation upon that monument, detailed all the similarities and all the circumstances which could establish a relationship between the fêtes of the birth of Christ and those which related to the birth of Mithra. That author, very pious, but not philosophic, can only see, in the very remarkable relationship between these two fictions, a prophecy as to the birth of Christ. He however remarks truly, that the Mithriac worship was spread over the Roman empire. He cites also the testimony of St. Jerome, who complained bitterly that the Pagans celebrated fêtes in honour of the rising Sun, or of Adonis, and likewise in honour of Mithra, in the same country, where it was said Christ was born, that is, Bethlehem; these, according to the theory we are endeavouring to support, were but the same kind of worship under different names, as an examination of the fable of Adonis, which will be given in a future number, will prove to every intelligent reader, when it will be seen that Adonis, like Christ, was miraculously born—suffered a cruel and untimely death—followed by a glorious resurrection.

We have shown upon what astronomical basis is founded the fable of the incarnation of the Sun in the bosom of a virgin, under the name of Christ; and now we will pass on to an examination of the supposed death—then to his resuscitation or resurrection at the equinox of spring, under the form of the pascal Lamb.

The Sun, the only Redeemer from the evil that his absence had produced, was said in highly poetic sacerdotal fictions, to be born at Christmas, or the solstice of winter, when he remains three months

in the inferior signs of the heavens—in the regions affected to evil and darkness, and is there compelled to suffer the malignant power of their chief before he (the Sun) passed the famous passage of the equinox of spring, which assures his triumph over darkness, and covers with fruits and flowers the face of the earth. The priests having personified the Sun, made a mere mortal of him—made him live exposed to all the infirmities of mortal life, until, triumphing in his course, he regained all that brilliancy which darkness for a season had wrested from him. The genius of allegory, so devoutly studied by the ancient mystagogues, or as they are very well called among the North American Indians, *mystery-men*, led them to compose a life, and imagine adventures analogous to the character that they had given to him, and which led to the attainment of the end proposed by the initiations. It is thus that Esop, wishing to picture men strong and unjust, who oppress the weak, has put *en scene* various animals, to whom he has given opposing characters, and has imagined an action proper to attain the moral end of his apologue. This is hinted at by Bacon in his Critique upon the Mythology of the Ancients, where he says, “In the first ages, when such inventions and conclusions of the human reason as are now trite and common, were new and but little known, all things abounded with fable, parable, comparison, allegory, &c., and even to this day, if any man would let new light in upon the human understanding, and conquer prejudice without raising contests, animosities, opposition, or disturbance, he must still go in the same path, and have recourse to the like method of allegory, metaphor, and allusion.” Again he observes, “The concealed and secret learning of the ancients seems separated from the history and knowledge of the following ages, by a veil or partition wall of fables, interposing between the things that are lost and those that remain.”

Besides the wrecks of ancient sacerdotal fictions, which were handed down to us in the works of Diodorus and Plutarchus, we have seen a life of Osiris and of Typhon (the god and devil of the Egyptians), composed by the Christian Bishop Synesius, who did not disdain to fabricate legends, believing, as he said he did, that fables were good for the common people, as they amused and kept them out of mischief. “When I am in my closet (said this worthy) I am a Philosopher—when with the vulgar I am a Bishop!” In these adventures, the characters and the portraits of the two principles of the Egyptian theology were traced from the imagination

with a bold and skilful hand. These principles were light and darkness, which seem ever to be struggling for mastery—poetically personified by Osiris and Typhon. The Persians had also their history of Ormusd and Alriamanes, which contained a stirring recital of their combats, ending with the victory of the good principle.

The Persian priests had their legend of the chief of their religion, and they tell us that prodigies announced his birth. He was exposed to all sorts of danger from his infancy, was obliged to fly into Persia, as Christ was obliged to fly into Egypt; he was pursued as him by a king who wished to destroy him; an angel transported him into the skies, from whence they said he brought back the book of the law; as Christ, he was tempted by the devil, who made him magnificent promises, if he would but follow him; he was pursued and calumniated, as Christ, by the Pharisees; he performed miracles, in order to confirm his divine mission and the dogmas contained in his book. Such was the history of the god Mithra given by the Persians—squaring exactly with the history of Christ given by his worshippers. Now, Mithra was but a personification of the Sun,—and we dare to say, what all intelligent readers will certainly think, that Christ was no more,—nay, that the Christian religion is a mere copy of the Persian—a branch of the same allegorical tree.

In concluding this hasty notice of the Festivals of Christmas and of Easter, we deem it necessary to impress upon the minds of all readers, that it is precisely at the equinox of spring that Christ triumphed, when he repaired the evils of the human race, according to the fable of the Christians, called the Life of Christ. It is at that annual epoch that are held the fêtes which have for their object the celebration of that grand event; for the Easter of the Christians, as that of the Jews, is necessarily fixed at the full-moon of the equinox of spring—that is to say, at the moment when the Sun passes the barrier which separates the empire of the god of Light from that of the prince of Darkness,—when re-appears in our climate the magnificent star which gives life and light to all nature. The Jews and the Christians call it the fête of the passage,—for it is then that the god Sun, or the lord of Nature, passes towards our regions, and distributes those benefits, of which the serpent of darkness and of autumn had deprived us during the winter. It is the festival of the lord, so called, because it was cus-

tomary to give to the Sun that title; for Adonis, or Adonai, are mere names for that star, Lord of the world. In the Oriental fable Adonis, or the god Sun, like Christ, goes out victorious from the tomb after his worshippers had deplored his death. In the consecration of the seven days to the seven planets, the day of the Sun was called the day of the lord, or commonly Lord's Day or Sunday. It precedes Monday, or the day of the Moon, and follows Saturday, or the day of Saturn,—two planets which occupy the extremes of the musical scale, of which the Sun is the centre, and number the fourth; thus the epithet Lord agrees in all its relations to the Sun.

The Festival of Easter, called the fête of the passage, was originally fixed on the 25th of March, that is to say, three months, day for day, after the fête of the birth, or the Festival of Christmas;—the birth of Christ was, as before proved, the birth of the Sun.

The learned Cedrenus says, that Christ died on the 23rd of March, and the resurrection took place on the 25th, from hence came the usage in the church of celebrating Easter, the 25th, that is to say, the eighth day before the kalends of April, exactly three months after the eighth of the kalends of January, epoeh of the birth of the Sun. The fête of the passion, or of the death of the god of day, was fixed at the equinox of spring, and held by the worshippers of the Sun in every country of the world; with the Egyptians, it was the death and resurrection of Osiris; with the Phenecians, it was the death and resurrection of Adonis; with the Phrygians, it related to the tragical adventures of Atys; but it is above all in the religion of Mithra, or god Sun of the Persians, that we find the most perfect resemblance to the death and resurrection of Christ, and the other mysteries of the Christian faith, Mithra, as Christ, was born on the 25th of December, performed many wonders and miracles, and like him, suffered a resurrection, and his sepulchre was raised where the elect went to shed their tears, and idolize their god. It is for those who so obstinately believe that Christ was a man-god, to account for so singular a coincidence, by an appeal to reason and history; but this appeal, we know, they dare not make, the evidence we have offered is irresistible—it is drawn from the nature of things, and the most authentic records of past times.

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BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 13.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

It is certain that if Hercules, of whom we read so much, was not really a Greek prince or *bona-fide* hero, but simply a personification of the Sun, as we have proved by authorities cited in former Letters, the fable of the twelve works is a solar fable, which can have no other relation than to the twelve months, and to the twelve signs—one of which the Sun appears to pass through each month : the consequence will have all the clearness of a demonstration, when we compare each of the works with each of the months, or with the signs and the constellations which mark in the heavens the division of time during each month of the Earth's annual revolution.

Among the different epochs at which the year formerly commenced, that of the solstice of summer was the most remarkable. It was at the return of the Sun to that point that the Greeks fixed the celebration of their olympic fêtes, called olympic games, established, it was said, by the great Hercules ; this was the most ancient error of the Greeks. In comparing the ancient calendar with the twelve works said to have been performed by Hercules, we shall fix the departure of the Sun Hercules in his annual course. The sign of the lion domicile of that star, and which furnishes to him his attri-

bates, having formerly occupied that point, his first work will be his victory over the lion, which is really that which has been placed at the head of all the others: but before we compare month by month the series of the twelve works with that of the stars which determine and mark the annual route of the Sun, it will be well to observe that the ancients, when regulating their calendars, employed not only the signs of the zodiac, but more often remarkable stars placed beyond or without the zodiac, and the several constellations which by their rising or setting announced the place of the Sun in each sign. All who have read the poems of Ovid and Columelle will have full proof of this; but it is yet more completely shewn in the ancient calendar. Our readers will now be prepared to compare the subject of the twelve chants with the constellations which preside at the twelve months—the bare reading of which will convince the most sceptical that the poem of the twelve works is nothing more than a sacred calendar, embellished by the lovers of the marvellous, who in distant ages made abundant use of allegory and poetry, in order to give life and soul to their fictions.

CALENDAR.

POEM.

FIRST MONTH.

FIRST WORK.

Passage of the Sun under the celestial lion, called lion of Nemea, fixed by the setting in the morning of the ingeniculus, or the constellation of the celestial Hercules.

Victory of Hercules and his triumph over the Nemean lion.

SECOND MONTH.

SECOND WORK.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the virgin, marked by the total setting of the celestial Hydra, called the Hydra of Lerne, the head of which is next morning renewed with the crab.

Hercules defeats the Hydra of Lerne, of which the heads, if cut off, miraculously renewed themselves, whilst he is constrained and resisted in his work by the cancer, or crab.

THIRD MONTH.

THIRD WORK.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the balance, at the beginning of autumn, fixed by the rising of the celestial Centaur, who receives Hercules with hospitality. That constellation is represented in the skies with a bottle full of wine and a thyrs, ornamented by vine leaves and grapes, and all of the season's productions. Then the celebrated bear rises the same evening, called by others the hog and the animal of Erymanthe.

Hospitality given to Hercules by a Centaur, and combat of the Centaurs for a tun of wine, victory of Hercules upon them, and defeat of a frightful wild boar which ravaged the forests of Erymanthe.

FOURTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the scorpion, fixed by the setting of Caiope constellation, in which was painted formerly a biche, or kind of dog.

FIFTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the sagittary, consecrated to the goddess Diana who had her temple at Stympale, in which was seen the birds Stympalides. That passage is fixed by the rising of the three birds, the vulture, the stork, and the eagle, pierced by the arrows of Hercules.

SIXTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the buck or old Capricorn, son of Neptune according to some, grandson of the Sun according to others. That passage is marked by the setting of the river Du Verscare, which flows under the point of Capricorn, and of which the source is directed by Aristec, son of the river Penee.

SEVENTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the Aquarius, and at that part of the heavens where the moon is every year at full, which served as epoch, when were celebrated games called Olympic games. That passage was marked by the vulture placed in the sky by the side of the constellation called Prometheus, at the same time that the bull of Pasephae or of Marathon, calminated to the meridian, at the setting of the horse Arion or Pegasus.

EIGHTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the Pisces, fixed by the rising in the morning of the celestial horse, which carries its head towards the Verscan, son of Cyrene.

NINTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the sign of the ram, consecrated to Mars, sometimes called the ram with the fleece of gold. That passage is marked by the rising of the ship Argo; by the setting of An-

FOURTH WORK.

Triumph of Hercules over a biche with horns of gold and feet of brass that he took upon the borders of the sea where it reposed.

FIFTH WORK.

Hercules near Stympale, gives chase to birds known under the name of birds of the lake Stympale, as represented to the number of three, on the medals of Perinthe.

SIXTH WORK.

Hercules cleanses the Augean stable, or stable of Augeas son of the Sun, or according to others, son of Neptune. He there made to flow the river Penee.

SEVENTH WORK.

Hercules arrives in Elide—he was mounted upon the horse Arion, he leads with him the famous bull of Crete which had ravaged the plains of Marathon. He caused the Olympic games to be celebrated of which he was the institutor, in which games he was the first combatant, he kills the vulture of Prometheus.

EIGHTH WORK.

Hercules makes a conquest of the horses of Diomede, son of Cyrene.

NINTH WORK.

Hercules embarks in the vessel of Argo, to go to make conquest of the ram with the golden fleece; he combats with female warriors, daughters of Mars, from whom he ravishes a superb girdle,

dromede, or the celestial woman, and of her girdle; by that of the whale; by the rising of the Medusa; and by the setting of the Queen Cassiopee.

and he delivers a young and beautiful female exposed to a whale or a marine monster, such as that to which was exposed Andromache daughter of Cassiopee.

TENTH MONTH.

The Sun quits the ram of Phryxus and enters under the bull. That passage is marked by the setting of Orion, who was amorous of the Atlantides or of the Pleiades, by that of the Bouvier or cow-herd, conductor of the oxen of Icarus by that of the river Eridan, by the using of the Atlantides and by that of the goat, wife of Faun.

TENTH WORK.

Hercules after the voyage that he made with the Argonautes to conquer the ram with the fleece of gold, returns to Hesperie to the conquest of the oxen of Geyon; he kills also a cruel prince who pursued the Atlantides, and he arrives in Italy with Faun at the rising of the Pleiades.

ELEVENTH MONTH.

Passage of the Sun to the twins, indicated by the setting of the dog Procyon; by the rising or appearance of the great dog in the train of which is seen the Hydra; and by rising in the evening of the Cygne celestial.

ELEVENTH WORK.

Hercules triumphs over a frightful dog, of which the tail was a serpent, and of which the head was bristled with serpents; he defeats also Cygnus or the prince Cygne, at the moment when Canicule, or dog, comes to burn the earth with his fires.

TWELFTH MONTH.

The Sun enters into the sign of the cancer or crab, to which answers the last month; at the setting of the river of the Verscare and of the Centaur; at the rising of the shepherd and his sheep; at the moment when the constellation of Hercules descends towards the western regions called Hesperie, followed by the dragon of the pole, guardian of the apples of the garden of the Hesperides, dragon which is represented in the sphere as crushed at his feet, and which falls near him towards the setting.

TWELFTH WORK.

Hercules' voyages in Hesperie, there to gather the golden apples guarded by a terrible dragon, which in our spheres, is near the pole; according to others, to carry away the ram with the golden fleece. He prepares to make a sacrifice, and invests himself with a robe stained with the blood of a centaur that he had killed at the passage of a river. That robe burns him with its fires, he dies and thus finishes his mortal career, in order to retake his youth in the skies, and there to enjoy a glorious immortality.

Here then we have a description comparative of the poetic chants and the twelve works, and of the heavenly appearances during the twelve months of the Sun's, or rather the Earth's annual revolutions ; the Sun, as our readers already know, having only a local motion on its own axis. Who will now deny that the indefatigable Hercules was a personification of the Sun ? Let every reader judge of the relations, and see to what extent the poem and the calendar agree. It is sufficient for us to say that we have not inverted the series of the twelve works, but have given it precisely as related by Diodorus of Sicily ; and as to the celestial phenomena, all can verify them with a sphere, by causing the colure of the solstices to pass by the lion and aquarius, and that of the equinoxes by the bull and the scorpion, which was the position of the sphere at the epoch when the lion opened the solstitial year about four hundred years before our era.

Even if the ancient philosophers had not informed us that Hercules was the Sun, even though the universality of his worship did not prove that a Greek prince could not possibly have produced such astonishing results in the religious world, and that so high a destiny belonged to no mortal, but only to the great god Sun, the benefactor and preserver of our existence, it would suffice to seize all the relations of the double tableau, in order to conclude with moral certainty that the hero of the poems is the god that measures time ; who conducts the year, regulates the seasons and the months, and distributes heat and life to all nature. To read the history of Hercules as a *bona-fide* hero, is to read a monstrous tissue of absurdities—a heap of fable, which accords with no chronology, offering in every page the most absurd contradictions, when men ignorantly insist that what was ascribed to Hercules was really performed by a man ; but it is a poem, vast, comprehensive, and ingenious, when understood to treat of the god which fructifies the universe. There all is movement, all is change, all is life. The solstitial Sun represented with all the attributes of force and power that he has acquired at that epoch, and that seems contained in him the depository of the universal force of the world. He is invested with the skin of a lion, and armed with an enormous club. He throws himself majestically and fiercely into the career that he is obliged to run through by the eternal order of nature. It is not the sign of the lion that he runs through—it is a frightful lion that

ravages the country ; he goes to offer it combat ; he attacks and stifles it in his arms, decks himself in the spoils of the vanquished animal, then passes on to achieve another victory. The celestial Hydra is the second monster which presents an obstacle to his course. Poets represent this monster as a serpent with a hundred heads, which it is vain to cut off, as they renew themselves, and with terrible additions ; but Hercules burns them with his destructive fires. The ravages which that frightful animal made, the fright of the inhabitants who resided near the cavern which served as a retreat for the monster ; the horrible hissings of the hundred heads, and on the other side the undaunted air of the vanquisher of the Nemean lion ; then his embarrassment when he saw the heads that he had cut off renewed by the power of the monster ; all is painted or described in the same manner that Virgil describes the victory of the same hero upon the monster Cacus.

It is besides, a consequence fairly to be drawn from the comparison we have instituted, that Hercules was not a mortal elevated to the rank of a god for his courage and the benefit he had conferred upon mankind ; nor the events of his pretended life, historical facts ; but merely astronomical phenomena, and further proves that the testimony of many ages and many people, in favour of the existence as men of the heroes of the different religions, the memory of whom is consecrated by a worship, by poems, and by legends, called sacred, is not by any means a sure or certain pledge of their historic reality : the example of Hercules shews that consequence in all its force. The Greeks believed in the existence as a man of Hercules quite as sincerely as the Christians believe in the existence as man of Christ ; but as before hinted, the belief of a people proves nothing more than the belief ; which must always give way before the evidence furnished by experience. What excellent matter for reflection to those who repose confidently upon the grand, but most fallacious, argument, that the belief of one or many people, and of many ages, can establish the truth of a matter of dispute ; above all, in that which touches religion, where the first duty is to believe without examination : surely, in such a case, the philosophy of one man is worth more than the mere opinion of thousands of men born and nursed in ages of credulity. These reflections find their application in the solar fable made upon Christ, the chief of the twelve apostles—the hero of the Christian legend ! nor will

eighteen centuries of fraud and imposture destroy the striking relations between that fable and the other sacred romances made upon the Sun, that Plato called the only Son of God ; but the Christians will speedily be compelled to acknowledge, at least those among them who dare to examine our Letters, that they are worshippers of the Sun, as the Indians, Americans, Phœnicians, Ethiopians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and in short, all people, ancient and modern ; only they worship the Sun under the name of Christ instead of Atys, Adonis, Jupiter, Apollo, Hercules, Bacchus, or Chrishna. Yes, the star which regenerates nature every year, at the moment of the celebration of Easter, is the great God of all the nations, and much lauded Christianity is mere idolatry. This has been proved in our two last Letters, when treating on the origin of the festivals of Christmas and of Easter, and their connection with the supposed birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

It is easy to understand what kind of developement a true poet was able to give to singular ideas, which were derived from physics in general—and astronomy in particular—whether agriculture or geography, or even politics or morals ; for all particular ends entered into the general system of the first philosophic poets, who sung of the gods, and introduced man into the sanctuary of nature, which seemed to have revealed to them all its mysteries. What a delightful field for the display of genius, when fiction and allegory had full liberty—all to feign and all to dare ! for nothing can be impossible to the gods—of course, we allude to the gods of human imagining, to whom it belonged to astonish all mankind, by a display of their magnificence and power ! What a wonderful career for genius to describe and paint, with all the force human language would permit, the wonders of the universe ! That was indeed the age of gold for poetry, which has been called the child of the sky and the gods. Since those ancient times, all poetic compositions are comparatively tame and spiritless—having little of that sublimity and that boldness of speculation sustained by all the force of genius when excited and sustained by the phenomena of nature, or that great God, of whom the poets were, in former times, the only priests and interpreters. There is very little poetry about modern priests, who are, in general, prosy, dull, and stupid enough ; but with the ancient teachers of the nations, all was enthusiasm and sublimity ; and nothing can open a vaster field to our conjectures

upon the antiquity of the world, and general civilization, than reflections upon the heavenly appearances set forth in those splendid poems, in which the constellations played so conspicuous a part. We might also give an analysis of the poems which treat of Bacchus, and shew that the supposed son of Semele was, as Hercules and Christ, a personification of the Sun—that physical being, the most powerful, as the most beautiful, agent of nature; and if we attach so much importance to proving that Bacchus and Hercules were but symbols of the Sun, adored by all ancient people under various forms and different names, it is because the conclusion is inevitable, that in former times men wrote the history of nature and its phenomena, as they now write the history of men, and that the Sun was, above all, the great hero of all such marvellous romances; with regard to the true character of which, posterity has been so grossly deceived. If the reader is convinced of this truth, he will easily admit our explanation of the solar legend, known by the Christians under the name of the life of Christ, which, it cannot be too often repeated, is but one of a thousand names of the god Sun, whatever may be the opinion of his adorers as to his real existence as a living god, prophet, or mere man; for their opinion unsupported by evidence, no more proves that Christ really existed, than did the opinion of the Greeks, unsupported by evidence, prove the existence of Mercury, Bacchus, Jupiter, or Hercules. The Christian fathers, who were learned enough to know the character of the ancient religion, immediately saw the wonderful similarity between the religion of Christ and the religion of the ancient Bacchus, Adonis, Hercules, and a crowd of others, but above all that of Mithra in Persia; but then, they contended that the devil copied the Christian religion before it existed, in order to spite God and bring his worship into contempt. Oh, wonderful theologians!—ye have, indeed, a thread for every needle! Just the same was said by the Greeks, who contended that the Egyptians stole from them (the Greeks) their gods, although these same gods were worshipped in Egypt ages before the Greeks existed! Nothing, surely, but the introduction of the devil can render this clear and convincing. Alas! poor devil! you have much to answer for!

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 14.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The preposterous vanity which leads human beings to suppose that a God they themselves acknowledge is incomprehensible—is something, yet immaterial—filling all space, yet occupying none—creating every thing, yet itself uncreated—loving truth, yet permitting falsehood—desiring man to be virtuous, yet tolerating their viciousness; that such a deity should assume the human form, and come masquerading among men, as God is said to have done in Christ, is certainly the very quintessence of the *deliramentæ doctrinæ*, or fanaticism run mad. We hear much of the presumption of the Jews, but surely nothing can equal the presumption—the maniac folly of the Christians,—nought but itself can be its parallel! The Jews say that God is a Spirit, that is, a something, the nature of which we know nothing,—here, at all events, there is no presumption; but Christians have not been content to worship a Spirit in spirit and in truth, but must needs have—oh horrible insanity!—a god of flesh and blood, a real man-deity,—an eating, drinking, talking god, who formerly ate upon the earth, and, in the opinion of some pious Catholics, is now eaten! And this they call honouring the Deity! and those who scorn to assist in their mad orgies, and refuse to dishonour their own nature, and bow down to the idols

superstition has erected, are denounced as irreligious, forsooth ! called infidels, deists, atheists, and other hard names, by the wise interpreters of what they call God's will, which is of course, that they should teach and we *pay*—they command and we obey ! These sleek-haired, hypocritical, spluttering, and shamefully ignorant preachers, who devour widows' houses, and, for a pretence, make long prayers, have the brazen-faced audacity to say, that all who resist their will, resist the will of God, for they are God's representatives on earth, and the preachers of his word ! Verily, if there be a devil, or spirit of evil, they represent *him*, and are most admirable preachers of *his* word. Resist the will of God ! Where can be found a Jew who would utter such impious balderdash ? Why, even Christian writers themselves tell us, "How vain is all resistance to God ; but the very will, the wish, the power to resist cannot rise into being unless supplied and supported by him." So that, according to these wise-acres, men are to be eternally punished for that resistance which God himself had supplied and supported them in. Oh priests, priests !—ye are the curse of the human race !—the plague-spots of society !—and while ye are permitted to domineer over the intellects of men—bend them to your hateful will, the earth will continue what it has hitherto been, through your accursed instrumentality, the abode of fiends in human shape ! Your unholy frauds *must* and *shall* be exposed !—aye, your frauds, cruelties, and most shameful opposition to human liberty and happiness, from Aaron downwards. The world has had more than enough of fable, and it is now prepared for noble truths ; and one, the most important of all, is, that it is not the Deity who has commanded that men should believe and worship—it is cunning men, who have insolently dared to deceive their fellow-creatures, by pretending that a god or gods, one or many, just as it suited their purposes, had made them his confidants ! Yes, knavish hypocrites have, in all ages of the world, set up systems of religion as an engine of tyranny, and a means by which they might plunder the people ; for what is it but desire and fear which leads men to worship with disgraceful insincerity the gods of their several nations. It is not respect and gratitude that fills our churches,—it is hope and fear. Relieve the human mind from the terrors of hell, and priestcraft will be for ever annihilated ! therefore it is, that the priests so strenuously support the notion of a deep fiery-gulf for sinners, and a place of delight for good believers, that is, for all who

pay them well; for if you pay, they care little what you believe. Who can be so silly as not to understand, that if the gods, or the priests in their name, promised nothing, their splendid temples would soon be deserted—converted into temples of science, or halls for the education of the people. All religions, whether Christian, Jew, or Mahomedan, have one common character, which is, to establish a correspondence between men and invisible beings, whether called gods, geniuses, angels, fairies, or devils—imaginary existences, to which half-crazed, half-rascal soul-torturers have created—spun out of their hot brains with a view to explain in their own manner the phenomena of nature! The selfishness and vanity of men is never shewn under so disgusting and truly contemptible a form as when they are trafficking with the *unseen powers*, which they suppose rule, after having created, the universe. These creatures make praying an article of commerce—they give their prayers that the gods may give them something *better* than mere words. It is always “give us this day our daily bread,” forgive us this and lead us out of that,—indeed, we always find that those who want the most, pray the most; so that the length of our prayers prove not our sincerity, but simply the length of our desires. Of course, it would appear very ridiculous to be offering up tears and beseechings to a nothing,—so a something is imagined, to which a shape, a form, and a character is given, according to tastes of individuals and nations. An old man with a long beard is sometimes the symbol of deity in Europe; in other parts of the world, an old woman without a beard is selected for adoration; the colour of the gods varies with the climate: nor are human beings content to give form and colour to the gods,—but also give them human passions, feelings, opinions, vices, and follies. This is happily hit off by Fontenelle in his *Dialogues des Morts* (Dialogues of the Dead), a part of which we shall transcribe:—

HOMER. You ought to know that my gods, such as they are, and all mysteriousness apart, have not been thought ridiculous.

ÆSOP. That makes me tremble; I seriously fear that people will think that beasts have spoken, as they are represented to have done in my fables.

HOMER. A truly pleasant fear.

ÆSOP. Ha!—what, and if people believe that the gods have delivered the discourses that you have put into their mouths, why should they not equally believe that beasts may have spoken in the manner that I have made them speak?

HOMER. It is by no means the same thing. Men wish that the gods may be as foolish as themselves; but they do not wish that beasts may be as wise.

This sage remark of Homer will hardly be disputed; for, though men pull down in imagination the gods to their own level, they have no desire to lift up the beasts to the same. God made man after his own image, saith the Scripture; the fool takes this literally, and says in his heart, I am like unto God—thereby likening God unto a fool; truly that is making a fool of Deity. The agents of this correspondence between men and gods are skilful tricksters, called priests, magicians, and impostors,—which last, may be considered as the generic name for magicians, jugglers, conjurors, and priests,—for mysterious men of all kinds, who are paid for teaching what they themselves don't know, are only the several species of the genus impostor, who all agree in saying, that they are the organs, if not the intimate friends, of invisible beings! Such is the foundation of all worship, and of all religion, which places man in relation with the gods, and the earth with the skies; in plain language, all organized worship which is superintended by priests, has for basis an ideal order of invisible beings, who are charged with the destinies of men who are more or less obedient to the voice of the true priesthood; and of course there are as many true priesthoods as there are true religions; and there are as many true religions as there are people who understand their own nature, and the nature of things beyond that which nothing is beyond—that is, the universe. Nor do the worshippers at the shrine of Jehovah, who hope one day to sing hallelujah above the clouds, entirely neglect the little comforts to be enjoyed beneath the clouds. Mammon has almost as many, perhaps more, worshippers than Jehovah; and the text, “what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul,” is little regarded. “It is by Plutus, or the god of riches,” said Aristophanes, “that Jupiter reigns; it is for him that sacrifices are made;” and goes on to say, that “since Plutus enriched so many men, Mercury complains that the gods received very few offerings, and wanting little, offered up very few prayers.” So that we perceive the priests, in the times of Aristophanes, were just the same kind of men as the priests of our times; for if these latter pray to Jehovah, with all their lips, they worship with all their hearts, and all their souls, the god of riches; thus we have the singular spectacle of a proud, wealthy, and rapacious priesthood, preaching humility, poverty, and charity! Let us root out

false hopes and shameful fears, and supply their place by a love that never tires, and a courage that never fails; then, and not till then, will there be morality and peace on earth. Take away from the people false and delusive hopes and fears, and false religion will be annihilated; for never are men more falsely religious than when they are poor, sick, miserable, and degraded; let it be remembered that it is weakness and fear, not strength and courage, that has raised altars to the gods. For the true philosophers, life has many charms—but death no terrors; they may desire to live, but cannot fear to die,—*the basis of their virtue is love of man, not fear of God.*

That many readers will admit the force of our arguments when applied to the heroes of the ancient religion, and yet persist that Jesus Christ was a man, or even a god, none can doubt; though if the reason be sought into, it will be found that it is simply this, that such readers had formed that idea before they read this book, and found it difficult to get rid of their first impressions and long cherished opinions, while others are so badly organized, that they will receive as sacred and divine, all, save that which is dictated by good sense and sound reason, and who seem to be as much on their guard against philosophy as though they had a natural innate antipathy to it: such unfortunate creatures are as much horrified by truth as mad dogs by water, or turkey-cocks by a scarlet mantle. We need hardly add, that with such men, their first opinions are their only opinions; and besides, as the habit of thinking enables us to think with precision and accuracy, so slothfulness corrupts the mind—destroys its force, elasticity, and power to separate truth from falsehood. Yes, it is thought which improves the mind, strengthens its powers, and renders it impervious to sophistry; but the majority of mankind do not think, but pay others handsomely to do that business for them; so that thinking has been erected into a profession,—the people seeming to forget the saying of Locke, “That a man could no more think through another man’s thoughts than he could see through another man’s eyes.” To decide between a possibility and an impossibility is the talent of all but the most grossly ignorant; but to separate truth from the errors with which it may be associated, to decide with precision and accuracy the degree of force in different kinds of opposing evidence, is a rare talent, belonging only to the few who have long laboured and meditated with the anxious desire to know the truth and act upon it. Men of these two orders of mind have

been noticed by Fontenelle, who observes, that "Clocks, the most common, and made with least of art, suffice to mark the hours; but it is only those made with more of art which indicate time to the minute. In the same manner, ordinary minds understand very well the difference between a simple likelihood and an entire certainty; but it is only fine and delicate minds who catch at once the more or less of likelihood or certainty, and can mark, so to speak, the minutes of their sentiments." The gross and ill thinking, it is not expected, will read these Letters,—all who do so will surely think a little; and, we may say without vanity, that no human being could read attentively, and examine patiently the evidence adduced, and the arguments enforced, in the Letters already written, without his faith in the existence, even as a man, of Jesus Christ, being much unsettled and greatly shaken. It is not pretended that the evidence already offered is so complete, that it is either full or sufficient to destroy the historical character of Jesus Christ—this evidence has yet to be furnished; and all we have attempted to do, up to the present moment, is to shew that all religions have one common source, which source is nature; that the Sun, being to human beings one of its most brilliant agents, has been the object of adoration and worship from the earliest recorded periods of history. That the force, grandeur, and the effects produced by the Sun, were the subjects of the songs or chants of the ancient priests and poets, and that what is foolishly called idol worship, was not at first, at least, the worship of the stock or the stone, the gold or the silver, as a real deity or deities; but these were borrowed only as emblems, symbols, or as mere signs of natural objects. The symbols of the Sun were placed in the religious temples as symbols, not as real gods; and though the common people did commit the egregious error of mistaking the sign for the thing, and even now, in some parts of the globe, worship idols of brass and of wood as real deities, the priests of those nations, although they find it expedient to nurse the delusion, are not themselves very often deluded; but it does however, sometimes happen, that priests become the victims of their own arts. As for the people, ancient or modern, whose kingdom is not of this world—that is, the world of reason—these remarks will produce little effect upon *them*,—but then, they are told for their satisfaction, that the blessed are the poor in spirit, and that the kingdom of heaven is for those who believe; and it would indeed be a pity if they should be deprived of their expectations of a future happy life, when they suffer so much misery in this.

The Catholics have been much abused as the worshippers of idols; and we are told, that Catholics worship images, as did the Pagans of old, and that like them, they give the glory of God the Eternal to the works of men's hands; but the Catholic denies this, and the Catholic Bishop of Siga, in a sermon preached at the consecration of the Catholic chapel at Bradford, in the county of York, on Wednesday, July 27th, 1825, said, "I know how common these charges are (that is, that the Catholics worshipped images as did the Pagans of old), and how otherwise respectable are the sources from whence they spring, or I should fear to insult your understandings, by supposing that any of you are capable of believing them; for, is it possible that in any age and country which claims to be so learned and enlightened, men should be found capable of believing that the majority of the Christian world—the great, the good, the learned of almost every civilized nation under heaven, are so ignorant, so debased, so stupid, so wicked, as to give divine honours to a likeness and senseless image? Is it possible that any of you should persuade yourselves that the most ignorant Catholic here present should be capable of adoring, for instance, the ivory image which you see upon that altar? But why, it may be inquired, if the image of Christ is not worshipped, is it there? Ah, my Christian brethren, look at that image and tell me, what impression does it make on your minds? It represents your Redeemer nailed to the cross, and dying for your sins. Can you behold such objects, unmoved? Can you fix upon it a vacant eye? Can you gaze upon it, and not reflect how great was *his* goodness who thus suffered!—how criminal were those sins which caused those sufferings,—how sincere ought to be your sorrow in having participated in the commission of them? It is to excite such emotions that the image is placed there; and let me ask you, could a more appropriate object stand upon a Christian altar, or be placed before the eyes of a Christian assembly, when they meet to pay their worship to their divine Redeemer—when every mind should be impressed, and every heart penetrated with the remembrance of his sufferings—the source of all our happiness, and all our hope?" This is the answer of the Catholic divine to the charge of idolatry, and he justly says "it is to excite emotions that the image is placed there—not that it may be worshipped as a real living God." The people require images and pictures; their eyes must be fed by sights and shams; for, as to spiritual deities, the people can have no notion

of them ; and however it may be that no image could be more appropriate to excite superstitious, or as the worthy divine would call them, religious emotions, as that of a man-god nailed upon the cross, such representations can only excite the ignorant multitude, who are ever the dupes of appearances ! But surely the Catholic divine must be a bold man who would answer that the most ignorant Catholic can and does distinguish between symbols, or signs of things, and the things themselves. The worship of images was prescribed and rigorously enforced by the first Christian councils,—and we read, “that the seventh general council, or the second of Nice, was assembled in 787, by Constantine, son of Leo and Irene, to re-establish the worship of images. The reader must know, that two councils of Constantinople, the first in 730, under the emperor Leo, the other twenty-four years after, under Constantine Copronymus, had thought proper to proscribe images, conformably to the Mosaic law and to the usage of the early ages of Christianity. So also the Nicene decree, in which it is said, that ‘whosoever shall not render service and adoration to the images of the saints as to the Trinity, shall be deemed anathematised,’ at first encountered some opposition. The bishops who introduced it, in a council of Constantinople held in 789, were turned out by soldiers.”

It has been shewn that from time immemorial men have symbolized their ideas of Deity—that in ancient times the notion was that the universe itself was a great god, got of itself, born of itself, and subsisting of itself ; but as it was a great whole, consisting of many parts, it was supposed that there were as many intelligences, angels, deities, or geniuses, as there were parts in nature. In the Greek mythology, more especially, all was personified, or symbolized ; the rivers, the mountains, the forests, the stars, the elements ; and all know that in Greece as well as in Egypt, the land was covered with statues erected in honor of the gods.

In our next we shall proceed to another branch of our subject, and consider the doctrine of the Trinity as a preparatory step to a right understanding of the collateral circumstances touching the religion of the Christians ; after which, nothing will remain for us to do than to shew, by an appeal to history, that what is said about Christ in the four gospels is a fiction, and, that the evidence set forth in proof of his existence, just proves the reverse.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 15.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

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The doctrine of the Trinity, observes Dr. Drummond, informs us that the Godhead consists of "three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity;" "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." Now, any man, under the influence of such vulgar principles as "reason and common sense," would conclude that three persons must mean three distinct beings, and consequently that there are three Gods! This, Dr. Sherlock candidly admits, and says, "it is plain the persons are perfectly distinct. A person is an intelligent being, and to say there are three divine persons and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense." Here then is palpable polytheism, from which, thus fairly exhibited, even orthodoxy recoils astounded. Doctor South, scandalized by such an admission, from a Doctor of his own church, showers down upon him a torrent of theological vituperation; and alleges that there is only "one infinite mind, with three modes, attributes, or offices, manifested under the different states or relations of father, son, and spirit." Thus the meaning of the word person is explained away; and after the most painful struggles against the conviction of their own minds, that God is one, the most eminent divines are reduced to the necessity of maintaining that the three

persons of their imaginary trinity are not persons, but something else. Tillotson calls them "three differences,"—Burnet "three diversities,"—Secker "three subsistencies,"—others "three postures!"—Le Clerc thought them to be "three distinct cogitations;"—and that the subject might be explained by the philosophy of Des Cartes. Some are for a specific, some for a numerical unity, and others for both united, though involving a monstrous contradiction. Waterland speaks of a "three-fold generation of the son, two antemundane and one in the flesh. The substance of the one person," he says, "is not the substance of either of the others, but different, however of the same kind or united." Barrow speaks of "the mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one." "They are joined together," says another, "by a perichoresis—and this perichoresis, circumincession or mutual inexistence is made very possible and intelligible by a mutual conscious sensation." Some divines understand the words person and personality in a philosophical sense, others in a political, and a third class in a theological sense. The doctrine of three persons, according to Watts, must be true, "at least in a political sense, yet cannot amount to so much as a philosophical personality, unless we allow a plurality of Gods." We sometimes find the same Trinitarian Divine confuting himself, for error is always inconsistent, and maintaining in one part of his writings, propositions subversive of those which he has maintained in another. We are told of a Ciceronian, a Platonic, an Aristotelian, and a Swedenborgian Trinity, and finally "the Trinity of the *Mobile*, or common people and lazy divines, who content themselves by calling it an inconceivable mystery."

Now, what is this but darkening of counsel by words without knowledge? Which of these contradictory schemes is to be embraced by the man who is determined to depart from the simple truth, that God is one? "What is there" asks the author of an excellent letter on this subject, "to guide me through the dark and dreary labyrinth? Not one solitary ray of light glimmers to direct my path. All is darkness and confusion: the more I read, the more I am confounded. I cannot advance a step, and I end as I began, without being able to find two men or two creeds agreeing in a similar answer to my inquiry—What is the Trinity?"

The dogma of the unity of God, the first theological dogma of the Christians, is not peculiar to their religion. It has been admitted by almost all the ancient philosophers—and even the

Pagans, whose worship was polytheistical in appearance, always acknowledged one grand chief to whom all others were submitted, under various names, whether gods or angels, as the Christian angels and saints are to the supreme God. Such was the great Jupiter with the Greeks and with the Romans—that Jupiter called the father of the gods and men, who was said to fill the universe with his substance. He was the sovereign monarch of nature, and though the name of gods was given to the other divinities, it was an association in the title rather than in the power; each divinity having his particular department under the control or empire of the first God, sovereign, and absolute master of all others. The Scripture itself gives the name of gods to beings subordinate to the first God, without injury to the unity of the chief, or first cause. It was precisely so with the Jupiter of the Greeks; they repeated, without ceasing, the epithet of *one* or *unique* that they gave to Jupiter; Jupiter, said they, is one. The oracle of Apollo admitted also an uncreated God, born of himself, whose dwelling place was the bosom of the fire Ether; a God placed at the head of all the hierarchy.

In the mysteries of the Greeks, it was customary to chant a hymn which expressed clearly that unity. The high-priest addressing the word to the initiated, to him said, “Admire the master of the universe; he is one, he exists every where.” It is a truth acknowledged by Eusebeus, Augustine, Justin, and other Christian apologists, that the dogma of the unity of God was received by the ancient philosophers, and that it was the basis of the religion taught by Orpheus and the mysteries of the Greeks.

It may be urged by Christians, that the ancient philosophers, who existed many ages before the establishment of Christianity, held the dogma touching the trinity from the revelation made to the first men; but it may be replied, we have not the slightest necessity to have recourse to the supernatural machinery of revelation, which, naturally considered, is an absurdity, when we know the reasonings or the series of abstractions which led the ancient philosophers to acknowledge the unity of the first principle, and when they have themselves given us the motives which led them to admit the monad or first unity. These motives are simple—they rise from the nature of the operations of our minds, and the form under which the universal action of the great whole presents itself to us.

The correspondence of all the parts of the world between themselves, and their tendency towards a common centre of movement and of life, which has caused men who regarded the great whole as an immense God, to admit his unity, not being able to conceive anything beyond the assemblage of all beings, or beyond the whole. It was the same with those who regarded the universe as a great effect. The union of all parts of the work, and the regular *ensemble* of all systems of the world, led them also to admit one only cause of one only effect; so that the unity of God was acknowledged as a principle in the minds of those who placed God, or the first cause, beyond the world, and in the minds of those who confounded God with the world, and did not distinguish between the workman and the work,—as Pliny, and all the most ancient philosophers, who held that all things are connected together by a sacred chain; nor can there be one thing strange to another, for all that is, they held to be combined to form a definite whole, upon which depends the beauty of the universe. There is, say they, but one only world, which includes all; one only God, who is every where; one only matter, which is eternal; one only law, which is reason, common to all beings. It is easy to deduce as a consequence, from the above dogma, the unity of God, that is to say, the philosophical opinion and the motive which gave birth to it. The fathers of the church themselves have inferred the unity of God from the unity of the world, that is to say, the unity of the cause from the unity of the effect; for with them the effect is distinguished from the cause, or God is separated from the universe; by which, we mean, they admitted an abstract cause instead of a real being, which is the universe. Saint Athanasius thus expresses himself: “As there is in Nature but one order for all things, we ought to conclude that there is but one God, artist, and ordainer, and from the unity of the work deduce that of the workman.”

We perceive then, that the Christians deduced their unity of God from the unity of the world, or rather the universe, as all Pagan philosophers had done before them. In all this we observe the natural march of the human intellect, and therefore it is quite unnecessary to attempt any explanation by an absurd supposition of a special revelation.

All Platoniciens admitted the unity of the archetype, or of the model upon which God created the world, as well as the unity of the *demiourgos*, or god artist, by a consequence of the same philo-

sophical principles, that is to say, from the unity itself of the work, as may be seen in the works of Proclus, or, indeed, any of the Platoniciens.

Those who, like Pythagoras, employed the theory of numbers to explain theological truths, give equally to the monad the name of cause and of principle. They express by the number *one*, or by unity, the first cause, and conclude that God is unity, from mathematical abstractions. Unity reproduces itself every where in numbers; all sets out from unity. It was the same with the monad divinity. Others, remarking the various forms of human administrations, and above all, that of the governments of the east, where through all time monarchy was the only known form of administration, believed that the government of the universe was conducted upon the same principle, in which all partial forces seemed united, under the direction and authority of one only chief, in order to produce that perfect accordance and admirable harmony of which the whole system of the world is the result. Despotism itself favoured this opinion, which pictured monarchy as the image of the government of the gods; for all despotism tends to concentrate power in unity, and confound legislation with the execution.

Thus the *tableau* of social order, mathematics, and the reasonings of philosophy, have, by different routes, but all merely human, led the ancients to prefer unity to multiplicity; in the first and supreme cause, or as it is sometimes called, the principle of principles. Simplicius thus expresses himself, "The first principle being the centre of all others, it encloses them all in itself by one only union,—it is before all—it is the cause of causes—the principle of principles—the god of gods." Let us then call simply principles, those particular principles; and let us call principle of principle, that general principle called cause of all placed above the visible universe.

It is thus that the universe, or universal cause, enclosing within itself all the other causes, which are its parts, was regarded as the principle of principles, and is the supreme unity from whence all flowed. Those who created an abstract or ideal world, and a God equally abstract and ideal, separated from the world, and by whom the world had been created after an eternal model, reasoned in the same manner upon the God, or cause of the universe; for the material world has always furnished the type of the intellectual world; and it is from what man sees that he creates his opinions

upon that which he sees not. The dogma of the unity of God, even with the Christians, takes its source in purely human reasonings—reasonings which have been adopted ages before Christians were known in the world, as any may be assured by the works of Pythagoras, or Plato, and in the books of their disciples. It was the same with regard to their triad or trinity, that is to say, the subdivision of the first cause into intelligence, or divine wisdom, and spirit, or the universal soul of the world.

By the ancients, man was compared to the universe; and the universe to man; and as man was called the microcosm, or little world, they made of the world an immense giant who enclosed all in one great whole, containing in its source what man had in little and by emanation. They remarked, that in man there was a principle of movement and of life, which was common to him with other animals. That principle manifested itself by the breath—in Latin, *spiritus*, or spirit. Besides that first principle there existed a second, that by which man reasoned, combined his ideas, and arrived at wisdom; it is the intelligence which is found in him in a much greater degree than in the other animals. That faculty of the human soul was called in Greek *logos*, which is translated into Latin by *ratio* and *verbum*. That Greek word expresses two distinct ideas, rendered by two different words in Latin; and in French by *ai son*, by *verbe*, or *parole*. The second is nothing more than the image of the first; for words are, or should be, the images of the thoughts; they are a means by which our thoughts are rendered sensible to others, and which, in some sort, seem to take a body in the air, when it is modified by the organs of speech. These two principles in man do not constitute two beings distinct from himself; but we may, however, of these two principles make two distinct existences by personifying them; but yet, it is always the living and thinking man in whose unity, or oneness, are composed all his faculties as in their source. Analogously did the ancients consider the universe as an immense God, one and unique, which enclosed all, and was itself all. His life, or his *spiritus*, as well as his intelligence, or his *logos*, which is eternal and immense, as himself was confounded in his first and radical unity called father, since it was from it that these two faculties emanated. None could conceive the universe God without conceiving him as living the universal life, and intelligent of an intelligence equally universal. Life was not intelligence, but both life and intelligence were

the life, or *spiritus*, and intelligence or divine wisdom which, in their mode of reasoning, belonged essentially to the divinity of the world, and made part of his unique substance, since it is impossible any could exist which was not one of its parts. All these distinctions, so subtle and refined, belonged to the Platonicien and Pythagorean philosophies, and had nothing whatever to do with what is called revelation.

There were no expressions more familiar to the ancient philosophers than the following :—"The universe is a great animated being, which encloses within itself all the principles of life and intelligence spread in its parts. That great being sovereignly intelligent is God himself, that is to say, God, word or reason, mind or universal life."

The universal soul designated *spiritus*, and compared with the spirit of life which animates all nature, distributes itself principally in the seven celestial spheres, of which the combined action was reputed to regulate the destinies of man, and spread the germs of life in all that which exists on this globe. The ancients symbolized that breath or *spiritus* which produces the harmony of the spheres, by a flute with seven reeds, that they placed in the hands of Pan, or the image meant to represent universal nature; from whence comes also the opinion, that the soul of the world was enclosed in the number seven, an idea that the Christians borrowed from the Platoniciens, and that they have expressed by the *sacrum septenarum*, or by the seven gifts of the holy spirit, as the breath of Pan, that of the holy spirit was, according to Saint Justin, divided in seven spirits. The unction of the proselytes was accompanied by an invocation to the holy spirit; they called it the mother of the seven houses, which signified, according to Beausobre, mother of the seven skies; the word *spiritus* in the Hebrew language feminine.

The Musselmen and the eastern Christians give to the third person of the trinity, for its essential property, life, that is, according to the first, one of the attributes of the divinity. The Syrians call it *mehaia* or living, and the *credo* of the Christians gives to it the epithet *vivificantem*. It is then, in their theology, the principle of life which animates nature, or that universal soul, principle of movement of the world, and also of all the beings it contains. This is the vivifying force, emanating from God, who, according to Varro, governs the universe by movement and by reason; for it is the *spiritus* which spreads life and motion in the world, and it is reason or wisdom which gives to it the direction and regulates its effects. That

spiritus was God, in the system of the ancient philosophers, who wrote upon the universal soul, or *spiritu mundi*. It is the nursing or nourishing force of the world, according to Virgil, *spiritus intus alit*. The divinity, according to their system, emanated from the first monad, and extended itself as far as to the soul of the world, according to Plato and Porphyry, or as far as the third God, to use their own expressions. Thus the *spiritus* was God, or rather a faculty of the universal divinity.

Besides the principle of life and of motion, these same philosophers admitted a principle of intelligence and of wisdom, under the names of *we* and of *logos*, or of reason and the word of God. God was said to reside principally in luminous substances. The word *light* in some languages, the French for example, signifies equally intelligence and physical light, for intelligence may be considered to the soul what light is to the eye. We need not, therefore, feel astonished that the Christians should contend that Christ is the light which enlightens every man coming into the world, and to make him the son of the father of all light; that which is certainly true in a metaphysical and in a merely physical sense, as Christ was nothing more than the luminous part of the divine essence rendered sensible to man by the Sun, in which, poetically considered, it may be said to be incorporated or incarnated. It is under that last form that he is susceptible of augmentation and of divination, and that he has been the object of sacred fictions made upon the birth and the death of the god Sun or Christ.

Another Letter must be devoted to the subject of the trinity, and if our readers object that the ideas we have attempted to set forth, touching the trinity, are of a mystical and unsatisfactory order, we can assure them, that, at all events, is not to be placed to the accounts of our misdeeds. There have been no ideas of God, yet given in the world, which have not been mystical and unsatisfactory, and the reason is, that there is no prototype in nature answering to the word God. Before we can hope to teach others, we must first comprehend ourselves,—and if we fail in this, our lessons are given at random. All that has been written about trinity, has not helped us to one atom of real knowledge upon the subject; nor should we have noticed the question were it not necessary to establish our position—that there never was an incarnated God, or mere man, called Jesus Christ!

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LETTER 16.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.*"—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

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The Stoics taught that Jupiter, or that sovereign intelligence which they supposed to rule the world, was contained in the luminous substance called Ether, which substance they regarded as the source or spring of human intelligence. Such an opinion, it must be confessed, savored much of Materialism; but, that should by no means surprise us, as it is clear that men were in former times accustomed to reason upon the matter that they saw and which struck their senses, before they dreamt about an immaterial being—or existence that they have since created by abstraction. If Plato were to shew his head above ground just now, he certainly would not complain, as he did in his Republic, of "blind men and dreamers who neglecting divine ideas and heavenly truths (that he names, strangely enough, the only beings, as though truths could be beings), give themselves up entirely to the body," which, he contends, is nothing more than a shade or shadow of a thing. It is clear, that matters have greatly changed since Plato wrote, as little now is taught but "divine ideas and heavenly truths;" ideas so essentially divine that divinities alone can comprehend their truths,—so very heavenly that inhabitants of earth, mere mortals, fail to reach

their sublimity,—and souls by our spiritual teachers, are far more considered than bodies, the latter of which, Plato (by sages called divine) informs us, are nothing more than shades or shadows of things, and as for the former, we suppose they are the shades or shadows of nothing ; but this is merely supposition on our part,—and as about the shadows of souls, little is known and a great deal said, the question can be best settled by theologists ; in the mean time it will be well to proceed with our subject.

It is certain that matter, how subtile soever, is still matter ; and as the ancient philosophers contended that the soul of man, as the souls of brutes, was but an emanation of subtile matter endowed with the faculty of thought, they have been called, and very properly, called, Atheists,—and we may add, that the assertion made by Catholicus, a writer in the “Times” (some few weeks since), that the more modern experimental philosophers of Greece and Rome were Atheists, is also beyond dispute ; but as to the question of experimental philosophy, it was a philosophy little understood, and very partially adopted by either Greeks or Romans. One thing, however, is certain, which is, that in the early ages of the world, matter was deemed capable of thought, and what is called animal life was considered as a phenomenon necessarily resulting from certain combinations and conditions of matter. We have grown so much wiser since the schoolmaster was abroad, at least we think we have, that such opinions appear abominable, absurd, and heterodox wild dreams ; but then, it should be remembered that philosophers of all climes, complexions, degrees, and ages, have occasionally been found napping ; surely if they fall asleep and dream, the vulgar may be expected to follow their example—nap and dream likewise ; and if such sleepings and dreamings should be flattering and pleasant, wish to dream on, and dislike not a little any who rashly arouses them from their delicious reveries,—growing angry, like Mycille, in Lucien, who is said to have well supped with a neighbour, and dreaming during the night that he had become rich, that he was carried about upon the shoulders of slaves, and enjoyed all the pleasures of opulence, was so enraged against the cock that crowed him out of his delicious dreamery, that he felt every disposition to choke it. The fate of the cock is that of all men who, by their crowing (*i. e.* speaking or writing) arouse their fellow-beings from the slumbers of fanaticism—disturb their

superstitious dreams, and thereby bring them to a sense of their miserable and degraded condition. But enough of dreaming and dreamers for the present.

Pythagoras has called God the active, ever-varying subtile particles, which seem in eternal and universal motion; and distinguishes God by the epithet luminous, from which all other existences he supposed to have been created; and according to Saint Augustine, the creation of celestial intelligence is comprised in the substance called light. All these were said to be participators in that eternal light which, they tell us, constituted the wisdom of God; and that we call, (say the saints,) his only Son. The most learned and ancient fathers of the Christian church, and the early orthodox writers, constantly say that "God is a light, and a light very sublime,—that all we behold of brightness, however brilliant it may be, is nothing more than a portion—a feeble ray of that light; that the Son is a light without commencement; that God is a light inaccessible, which enlightens eternally, and which never disappears, and that all the virtues which surround divinity are lights of the second order—rays of the first light."

The theology of Orpheus likewise taught that light, called the most ancient of beings, and the most sublime, is God—that inaccessible God who envelopes all in his substance, called counsel, light, and life; which theological ideas have been copied by Saint John, the Evangelist, who says "The life was the light, and the light was the life; and that the light was the word, or the counsel, and the wisdom of God."

A sufficient number of authorities have been quoted to shew that it was a received dogma among the ancient theologians, that God was a luminous substance, and that light constituted the intelligent part of the universal soul of the world, or universal God. The Sun seeming to be the great focus of light, was regarded as the intelligence of the world, or at least, its principal seat,—hence the epithets *animus mundi*, or intelligence of the universe,—the eye of Jupiter, that the ancient mystics applied to the light, as well as that first production of the Father, or his first-born Son.

These ideas, with many others of an equally useless character, have passed into the theology of the adorers of the Sun, known under the name of Christ, the Son of the Father or the first God; his first emanation—a God consubstantial, or, formed of the same lu-

minous substance. Thus the god Sun is also the *logos*, the word or intelligence of the grand Being, or of the great universe God—that is to say, the god of Day has all the characters that the Christians give to their Redeemer, who was nothing more, as must appear from an analysis of their religion, than a personification or ideal embodiment of the Sun.

Proclus, in his Commentary upon the Republic of Plato, considers the Sun under two relations—as God non engendered, and as God engendered. Under the relation of principle of light, which illumines all, he is sacred; he is not considered as body; under the relation of being uncreated, he was said to rule over visible bodies. This is certainly not very intelligible; but ancient philosophers did not always desire to be intelligible,—of them it may be truly said, they used language not to convey but to conceal their thoughts; but let us make the best of them. Well, then, under the relation of a created being, he was ruled and suffered certain modifications like all other beings; but as the principle or source of light, he was held sacred, and not as a being or body. In the Platonic subtlety we perceive the distinction of two natures in the Sun, and consequently of Christ, that we have proved to be nothing more than an ideal incarnation of the great luminary. Such was the character of philosophy in the famous schools, when the Christians composed their theological codes; and the authors of these works spoke the language of the philosophy of their time. Saint Justin, one of the most zealous defenders of the Christian dogmas, tells us that there are two distinct natures in the Sun—the nature of light and that of the body of the Sun, with which it is incorporated. He adds, that “it is the same with the two natures of Christ, the word or *logos*, when he is united to God or the Father, and human or incarnated word, when he resides among us.” Our readers, we suspect, will not say with the worthy saint, these were the two natures of a man called Christ, but the two natures of Christ, or the Sun adored under that name.

Light, supposed to be incorporeal and invisible in the system of the Spiritualists, is that pure *logos* which, in the ancient mystical phrase, was said to reside in the intellectual world, and in the bosom of the first God,—but the light becoming sensible to man when collected in the radiating disc of the body called the Sun. Here we have the uncreated light which took a form, and came among men.

It is that *logos*, incorporated or incarnate, descended in the visible world, which has been called the repairer of the sins of the world, the redeemer who triumphs over darkness or Satan; for, as Christ is an ideal personification of light, so was Satan an ideal personification of darkness, physical or mental, and all its attendant evils. It is nevertheless true that the system of the Spiritualists is based entirely upon that of the Materialists. Spiritualism was born of materialism, and borrowed from it all the divisions in order to create the chimera of a god, and of a universe purely intellectual. That men contemplated visible light before they imagined an invisible light, is certain; they must have adored the Sun which struck their eyes before they created by force of abstraction an intellectual Sun; they admitted one universe or God before they supposed the unity of a great Being distinct from the universe, yet enclosing all, and absorbing all in his own substance: but when men reasoned upon a fictitious universe or world, as their forefathers did upon the real universe, and the intellectual God was endowed with a principle of intelligence, and a principle of life, equally intellectual, all the life and intelligence in the world of realities was said to emanate from him.

The early Christian fathers who, as before observed, were more or less Platonicien, had one Sun intellectual, of which the visible Sun was only the image; one incorporeal light, of which the light of the world was a corporeal emanation; finally, an incorporeal word and a word invested with a body and rendered sensible to men. That body was the corporeal substance of the Sun, above which they placed the uncreated and intellectual light or *logos*.

That refinement of philosophy has furnished the Evangelist John with the only morsel really theologic to be found in the Evangelists — “The word took a body he inhabited with us, and we have seen his glory; it is that of the only Son of the Father.”

The distinction of intellectual and corporeal Sun is beautifully set forth in the admirable and really superb discourse that the Emperor Julian addressed to the Sun, which contains the principles of the theology of that age, and furnishes the best explanation of the two natures of Christ and his incarnation, that foolish fanatics talk so much and know so little about; — which conception of the two natures originated the fable believed literally by imbecile and

ignorant Christians, which relates that Christ took a body, was born of a virgin, died, and was resuscitated !

Enough has been written in this and former Letters to shew that the Christians really have nothing in their theology which properly belongs to them, and that all that which savors of metaphysical subtlety in their discourses and dogmas, was borrowed from the ancient philosophers—above all the Platoniciens. Borrowing without leave and without acknowledgment, is little better than robbery—a species of literary petty larceny ; but, indeed, the Christians are thieves in more ways than one—of course we allude now to the early Christian writers, who palmed off upon their dupes something original as their own, which was, in point of fact, neither the one nor the other. They were, besides, fools as well as knaves ; indeed, these two characters are generally coupled, as Madame Deshouliers pithily observes,—

On commence par être dupe,
On finit par être coquin.

Which may be translated thus :

Men commence by being dupes,
They end by being knaves.

Whether Christian or Hindoo, however harsh it may sound, they certainly cannot help being the most mischievous of all thieves, as they rob us of both time and temper, whatever may be their honesty in other respects. But still it must be granted, that if the Christian fathers did steal from the ancient writers their thoughts, they did so with a good grace, backed by the most consummate impudence, most likely, however, calculating that the vulgar might be prevented, by judicious arrangements, from learning either to read or write, so that there would not be the slightest danger of detection ; and as to the enlightened, they belonged to the same class, and practised the same craft, and would not, as the common folks say, *split*, or let the cat out of the bag : no, no ; “ there is honour among thieves ; ” and so all was kept perfectly snug,—or if an upstart, dissatisfied individual did write against Christianity, or the tricks of its professors, these gentle pharisees and soothsayers, did answer him and his arguments by burning his books, and so gained an easy victory. This was the way they handled the celebrated Celsus, whose books were used as church fuel, while those of his

opponent, Origen, who wrote in its support, were carefully preserved! Heaven preserve us from the tricks and clutches of such holy controversialists! But, to return, Macrobe has given us an idea of the ancient opinions from which those of the Christians were borrowed, which idea encloses a true Trinity, of which that of the Christians is but a copy: "The world (he says) has been formed by the universal soul, which soul answers to our *spiritus* or mind. The Christians, when invoking their Holy Spirit, call it also their Creator,—*Veni, Creator Spiritus, &c.*" He adds, that from that mind or soul proceeds intelligence, that he calls *mens*. It is this that we have before shewn to be universal intelligence, of which the Christians have made their *logos*, or word, wisdom of God, which intelligence he has made to emanate from the first or supreme God. Here, then, we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which creates and vivifies all. The same author goes still farther and recalls the three principles to a first unity, which he calls sovereign God; and after having based his theory upon that Trinity, adds—"You see how unity, or the original monad of the first cause, conserves itself entire and indivisible, as far as to the *spiritus* which animates the world.

Thus the dogma of the Trinity, or the division of unity or the first principle into principle of intelligence and principle of universal life, which encloses within itself in some inexplicable manner, all things and all partial or second causes, is merely a theological fiction, and only one of those abstractions which separates for a moment, in idea, or by thoughts, that which is in itself indivisible and inseparable by essence, and which isolates, in order to personify them, the constituent attributes of a being or universe necessarily *one*.

In the same manner the Indians personified the sovereign power of God, and gave to him three Sons. The one is the power to create, the second to conserve, and the third to destroy. Such is the origin of the famous Trinity of the Indians,—for the Christians are by no means the only people who have had Trinities; and we may add, what should be well remembered, that *the Indians had theirs before the era of Christianity!* They had likewise the incarnation of the second person of that Trinity, known under the name of Vichnou. In one of these incarnations he takes the name of Chrishnou. The Sun is supposed by them to be the depositary of

this triple force or power,—and they give to the Sun twelve forms and twelve names—one for each month—as we give to Christ twelve apostles. It is in the month of March, or under the sign of the Lamb, that he takes the name of Vichnou. The triple power in their theology represents only unity—so that, like the Christians, they have a trinity in unity, or three in one!

The Chinese have likewise their Trinity, equally mysterious. According to them, the first being engendered the second, and the second the third. With us, the Holy Spirit proceeds also from the Father and from the Son. The three have made all things. The grand terme, or grand unity, say the Chinese, comprehends three—one is three, and three are one! The Jesuit Kirker, in a Dissertation upon the Unity of the First Principle and the Trinity, traces back all these metaphysical subtleties as far as to Pythagoras and to Mercury. Augustine himself pretends that all the people of the world have opinions upon the Divinity very like those of the Christians,—that the Platoniciens, the Pythagorians, and many other philosophers,—Egyptians, Indians, Lybians, Persians, Chaldeans, Seythians, Gauls, and Spaniards, had many dogmas in common with them upon the unity of God—the source of light and of good; to which we may add, that all these philosophers existed ages before the appearance of Christianity in the world,—and the conclusion, that the Christians borrowed from them their theological dogmas, at least in the points which are common to them all, is irresistible.

So much for the mysterious dogma of the Trinity; about which so many thousands of volumes have been written, without conveying a single definite or truly rational idea; but if doctors live by disease, soldiers by war, lawyers by litigation, and priests by folly, it is too much to expect that they would, if they could, destroy these evils. A man was once taken before a French magistrate charged with stealing a loaf; the culprit pleaded guilty to the charge, but urged that sheer hunger compelled him to do it,—adding, “Sir, I must live;” to which the worthy magistrate replied that he “saw no necessity for that.” Now, lawyers, soldiers, priests, and others, when they are charged with grave offences against society, insist that they must live; but the people begin to say, “we really do not see the necessity for that;” and then we shall have the *commencement du fin* of all quackeries.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 17.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The first part of our work is accomplished; the origin of all religions, including the Christian, has been shewn by a reference to history,—and if our reference to the multitudinous facts of history has not been so full or complete as some, who love to search, probe, and examine, with a view to obtain truth, may desire, it will, we think, be efficient for all practical purposes. All are not searchers and inquirers—when that searching and inquiring is of a difficult and abstruse character; besides, the object of these Letters is not to give a history of religion, but only so much of evidence drained from authentic records, as will suffice to satisfy the unlettered reader, who desires to know, that information, without which he cannot understand how human errors have taken root, grown up, and, like the poisoned trees of fable, spread evil and death around. Error is poisonous—its antidote is Truth! but there is no royal road to truth,—the path is beset with difficulty and danger,—and those who seek and find it, must be bold, enthusiastic, and persevering—not to be deterred by danger. This is not the language of hyperbole—it is the language of common sense and plain reason,—nothing but industry, determination, and perseverance, can emancipate the human mind; but, at the same time, to

abuse those who differ from us—to use foul language and denounce men—is not the best way to implant truth. It is far wiser to implant a truth than to extirpate an error, as education is now given, errors are far more numerous than truths,—for, as Rosseau justly observes, “truths come single, whilst errors run in crowds;” but one truth well understood will destroy all that opposes it—for truth is to falsehood what light is to darkness—they cannot co-exist, for, as in nature there must be either light or darkness, so in man or man’s conceptions there must be truth or error. Error is the Satan, Devil, Great Fiend, or Spirit of Evil personified by poetic theologians,—error is moral darkness, while truth is moral light, personified, and called Jupiter, God, Jehovah, Lord, &c. This makes plain and intelligible the Scriptural language, that “God is a Spirit, to be worshipped in spirit and in truth;” for as light was to the Jews, and others, the body of divinity—the divine essence,—and as truth is to the mind what light is to the eye, darkness being antagonistic and typical of evil or error, which is its parent, the demon of darkness was and is the demon of error—said to be immortal, because error is immortal, as darkness is. Both are inseparable, from the nature of things; but it is with truth as with light—the more of these we have, the less of darkness and error; the strengthening of the one is the weakening of the other: so we find that in Egypt the triumph of Osiris, or the god of light, was the defeat of Typhon, or god of darkness or evil; in Persia, Ormuzd, or the luminous deity, was worshipped and adored, while Ahrimanes, the spirit of darkness and protector of error, was dreaded as an embodiment of all that is bad in nature. When we read in the book of Genesis that “the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,” &c., we have the language of the ancient mystics; for no man in his senses—no man who does not sacrifice sense and reason upon the shrine of folly—will for a moment suppose it possible that the earth could be without form, and void; for whatever *was*, must have had *some* form, and could not by possibility have been void, unless we believe (for we cannot really think it) that the earth was and was not at the same time, or that what *was* existed without form, and was void, or that the spirit of God moved upon the face of that which had no face! but all these mistakes have been a consequence of the false teaching of theologians, who, forgetting that God is a spirit, and a spirit of

love too, "and that he who hath not love hath not seen God, for God is love," have read the Scriptures, and expounded the Scriptures, without knowing the true meaning of its contents; but the time has arrived to give a true interpretation of Scripture, which must be read aright ere it can be realized: this we do not propose to do in this work, though we may attempt it in some other; but a concise exposition of Biblical history, at least such portions as relate to the supposed existence of Christ, will now be useful. The Christian expounders, or confounders, of the Bible, are certainly, taken *en masse*, the most ignorant, invincible simpletons, that ever profaned the sanctuary of reason,—like certain filthy creatures, they defile while they attempt to undermine the temple of true philosophy. With all our boasted science—with all the practical improvements in the arts of life—our rail roads, canals, steam-ships, and wonderful results of human curiosity, pricked on by avarice, this country, which prides itself upon its enlightenment, is overrun by wild fanatics, whose ignorance is only to be equalled by their presumption,—who rave about gods and devils as though both gods and devils were among their familiar acquaintances,—who talk so lustily about heaven, that such vulgar things that belong to earth seem to these celestials as unworthy of regard. They tell us what is, what was, and that which is to be, which, if all do not believe, hell is to be their portion; from which horrible place there is, we are told, no redemption! They are far better acquainted with the government of hell than the government of earth; but then, indeed, the earth under their teaching is but a hell in miniature,—so that in describing the one they give a tolerably correct account of the other. Their descriptions of hell are warranted sound and orthodox, though no two of their descriptions entirely agree; they cannot all be accurate, though in the main they may be tolerably correct; and we are told that it is a pit to which there is no bottom—full of devils of all sorts of shapes, with some green devils, which are shapeless, like Milton's Death,—shapes they can hardly be called that shapes have none—whose only occupation seems to be to roast and torture and torment, by sundry tricks, those unfortunate souls whose deeds done in the flesh have been displeasing to the Deity, that is, to his agents the priests, who are rarely particular as to what may be said about religion or Deity, if *they* are left alone. These people are remarkably sensitive when the honour of Deity is concerned—when the honour of Deity and their own power and emoluments

are concerned. This greatly puzzled Moliere; the celebrated French wit, who, when in one of his comedies he made an expose of the rogueries of the priests, found that he had greatly sinned and thrust himself into a lions' den without any of the preternatural protection afforded to the lucky and prophetic Daniel; but a friend let him into the grand secret, by saying, "Ah! Moliere, if you had been content to write against religion, you would have been perfectly safe; but you wrote against the priests, and that priests will never endure." There is an old proverb, that "what can't be cured must be endured," and the modern priests have found to their cost, that the arm of flesh, upon which they formerly relied, is now palsied, like that of the tyrant Gloster—it is shrunk up like a withered shrub. Persecution, once the staff which supported their giant corruptions, is now snapped asunder! and if the priests of these times rely upon persecution as the prime support of their power, they will find it as a "broken reed, which not only basely fails, but cruelly wounds the hand that rests upon it." Already they have many splinters sticking in their flesh—true thorns goading them into wisdom, which, however painful, do not convince priestly sufferers that the reed is a broken and dangerous one; they are incurable in their folly, and armed to the teeth in their own incurable and *horny* bigotry; the arrows of reason cannot reach them; they strike, but do not penetrate,—so the Bible, which ought to be *the book*, telling us of things as they were—is made an instrument of despotism—wielded by knaves and fools!

It has been contended that neither a god nor man called Jesus Christ existed in Jerusalem; but, as stated in a former Letter, it is not contended that neither a man or men called Christ once existed in Jerusalem, any more than we should deny that a man named Brama, Vishnou, or Chrishnou, once did certain things in India; or that a man called Hercules once played a conspicuous part in Phenecia and Egypt; but it is denied that a man or god called Christ was born of a virgin, performed certain miracles, was crucified by the Jews, and after remaining three days, or nearly so, in the tomb, ascended into heaven,—it is denied that a man called Jesus Christ performed those wonders, and delivered those instructions which have been ascribed to him. All Christians will agree that the story told by ignorant and abused Indian enthusiasts about the god Brama coming down upon the earth in the form of a man, and eating of flesh like a Canibal, is absurd and unworthy

of credit. What Christian would believe that Chrishnou, or Chrishna, or Vishnou, suffered all the metamorphoses which credulous Indians believed they did? Who, one degree above or below lunacy, would credit the idle tales (for idle and most mischievous they are when taken in relation of facts) about Hercules and his club, Balaam and his ass, Sampson with and without his hair, Jupiter and Juno, Ceres and Bacchus, Proserpine and Pluto, and a hundred other gods and goddesses, whose histories have been deemed veritable, sacred, and most holy,—to disbelieve which, was deemed execrable, and a crime worthy of death. The poet says,

Would that God the gift would gie us

To see ourselves as others see us.

If Christians could see themselves as others see them, they would be far more humble—far less self-sufficient and arrogant than they now are—think less highly of themselves, and far better of others—have less of love for themselves, and more for their fellow-beings,—or rather, their self-love would be far more social in its consequences.

Fearful denunciations are uttered against those whose interpretations of Scripture are not *a la mode*;—pulpits ring with the indignant eloquence of divines, who forget the text, “Judge not, lest ye be judged; condemn not, lest ye be condemned; and forgive, as ye desire to be forgiven;”—men who seek to blow the coals of bigotry, and re-kindle the torch of persecution at the almost expiring embers of fanaticism. Such impotent rage we fear not, and shall proceed to prove by the Bible that *neither Christ nor Abraham ever existed*, but were purely fictional characters. Christ was, as all Christians, we presume, know, a branch of the genealogical tree of which Abraham was the root; but as there can be no branch without roots—and as the existence of Christ, according to the Scriptures, is contingent upon that of Abraham, to destroy the belief in the existence of Abraham, is to destroy the existence of Christ. It is easy to lop a branch from a tree without disturbing its root, but when the root is destroyed the branches wither; and where there never was a root, there never could have been branches. Priests, who are ever straining after types and shadows, affect to believe that what is written in Zechariah, “Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is *The Branch*; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord,” is typical of Christ; but theological eyes can see—

theological ears can hear, what can neither be heard nor seen by

others. What a man whose name is "the Branch, growing out of his place," has to do with Christ, we are at a loss to discover; but this probably arises from the obliquity of our mental vision, which cannot perceive relations that sound believers can, whose faith is of so plastic and accommodating a nature, that it squares itself to all occasions, and loses nothing by subtraction; and men of much faith can say as Juliet of her love, "the more I give the more I have to give;" and the wider any proposition is of reason and consistency, the more room has faith to play and exercise itself. Much faith and poverty and spirit are the indispensables of all true Christians, "for blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven;" and again, "he who believeth shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall be damned;" so that, poverty of mind or spirit, and much belief, theologists consider go hand-in-hand,—and consistently enough, denounce reason, temperance, &c., as of the devil. Infidels are, according to these worthies, an abomination upon the face of the earth—men who have "deserted the fountain of living waters, and made unto themselves cisterns—cracked cisterns—that will hold no water." Of course, by living waters is meant streams of faith, so that, those who drink them not, and thirst after the dead waters of reason, are to die of thirst, and perish everlastingly!

The faithful we hope not to convince—the reasonable only are appealed to,—and to these we undertake to shew that it is impossible that what is related in Scripture about Abraham can be true, or anything more than an Eastern romance or allegory. The Bible, say our preachers, is a revelation from Deity, and call upon us to believe it upon that ground; but then, after all, reason must judge whether it be revelation or not. Those who declaim against reason are not expected to be reasonable,—the pillar of their orthodoxy is faith, and their pride is not to try books and systems by their sense, but bend their sense to books and systems. The reasonings of theologists generally turn upon one proof, that may be likened to a mathematical point, which is without length, breadth, or thickness, and therefore purely imaginary. There is no such thing as a mathematical point, say the men of science, so that, a mathematical point is in reality no point at all; and if the comparison hold good, theological reasonings have no point, save an imaginary one,—existing only in the minds of those who repose upon it; but to proceed with our exposition.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David,

the son of Abraham,"—so says the first verse of the first chapter of St. Matthew: thus Christ, according to Matthew, descended in a right line from Abraham,—as we are afterwards told in the same chapter, "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." Now, this Abram or Abraham, or, as called among the Arabs, Ibrahim, was said to be the son of one Terah, "And Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran;" then we read that "the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran:" immediately afterwards we are informed that "The Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of the country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will shew thee. So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." Here there is a slight discrepancy in the two statements,—Terah begat Abram when he was seventy and five years old, and died at the good old age of two hundred and five years. So that, at the death of Terah, according to vulgar arithmetic, Abraham was 135 years old when the Lord said, "Get thee out of thy country, &c.;" but theologists have an arithmetic of their own, and have one reply to all objections, which is, that they, the objectors, must have faith, and then all difficulties will vanish—mountains will be removed; those who have it will believe Abram was but 70 years old when Terah died according to Scripture, and 135 years old according to Cocker. Contradictory absurdities and impossibilities, all sink before faith. A great deal more is said about Abram; and among other interesting particulars we are told, that "the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre; and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, *three men* stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself towards the ground." This *tete-a-tete* between the Lord and Abraham is inexplicable to mere reasoners; for what are we to understand by the term *Lord*, if not Jehovah the great God of the Universe?—but then, how can we suppose that Abraham would address such language as the following to God, or Gods?—for there were, according to Genesis, three of them in the shapes of men; but, the Trinitarians contend that three are one! so we must understand, if it be understandable at all, that the three angels

were, in some mysterious and inexplicable manner, one. This mysteriousness and inexplicability is rendered more inexplicable and mysterious the farther we proceed with the text; for after it is said, that Abraham ran to meet them at the tent door; he addresses *them*, and said *My Lord*, as though the three were one; which idea is strengthened by the fact, that Abraham always addresses the three as *My Lord*, and not *My Lords*—and *the Lord* always replied; so that, if there were three, one only acted as spokesman; but, to suppose that God took an angelic, or human shape, and talked with Abraham in the plains of Mamre, is, of course, out of the question, especially when we consider the language Abraham addressed to him, or them, for he said, “*My Lord*, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant;” and again, he is exceedingly familiar when he says, “Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree;” but certainly, not at all according with sober notions of Deity. A God, devil, or angel with dirty feet, and so tired as to need to rest himself under a tree, savours of the absurd.

Longinus, the great critic, dwells much upon the sublimity of the Scripture; but really the above borders upon the ridiculous; *du-sublime, du-ridicule*, says the proverb, and whether it is sublime or ridiculous to talk or write about Gods washing their feet, or resting themselves under trees, we leave others to determine. We read also, that Abraham said “and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do as thou hast said.” Now let every thinking reader reflect upon this passage, and ask himself, or herself, this simple question—can such language be received as literally true? The answer of every reasonable being must be in the negative, which will lead us to considerations of a very grave and important character,—for if we cannot literally interpret the language of Genesis, and if the very existence of Abraham depends upon such literal interpretation, it will be clear that the man called Abraham never existed; but as we proceed, the allegorical character will be proved by Scripture itself, for it is our intention to destroy the belief in Abraham and Christ, by an appeal to ancient philosophers, Biblical, and what is called, profane history.

THE

EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

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FROM A GERMAN JEW,

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LETTER 18.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.*"—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The common cry of Christians is—the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible; so say we—the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible; for by that same Bible, we will prove to all capable of exercising their reason, whose brains are not rheumatized and palsied by fanaticism, that the books of Genesis are the books upon the literal interpretation of which the whole Christian scheme depends. All that is written about Christ and Abraham must be *true or false, a fable or a real history*: we say it is a fable, and will prove our assertion by the Scripture itself. Hast thou appealed unto the Bible? then by the Bible must thou abide,—it is a weapon, O Christians! that you have long wielded; but it is now to be used against yourselves by those who have deeply studied its contents, not in the spirit of a Jew, Christian, or Infidel, but in the spirit of a philosopher, who searches not for evidence or argument to support some profitable darling theory, but that truth may be established, and the mind of man freed from the shackles that a grovelling and most debasing superstition imposes upon it. That a lie cannot live, has passed into a proverb; and if the belief in Abraham and Christ be a lie, it cannot live,—truth alone being eternal and immortal, all lies must die.

The book of Genesis is either a scientific exposition of the gene-

ration of things, or a mere cosmogonic fable ; if the former, it will bear the test of a precise and searching investigation ; if the latter, it will not bear that test ; for falsehood and truth, being necessarily antagonistic, have been through all time, are now, and will eternally be opposed to each other ; nor let our Christian readers fear, for if they hold the truth, *it cannot perish* ; and those who dread investigation, only prove this, that they have not perfect faith, but fear, lest their opinions and systems should be scattered to the winds by the breath of free inquiry.

It is most inconsistent in Christians, who appeal to the Bible as a casket containing all sorts of moral treasures, to shrink from the consequences of such appeal. They say, search the Scripture ; but wherefore are we to search, if not to find that which lies hidden there ; that which we see requireth no searching out, it is that we see and know not we hope to see and to know by seeking for it. The outcry against inquiry is the outcry of knaves and fools, who howl against the march of intellect, and the spread of what they call Infidel principles, as though possessed by the spirit of a wolf, or, as the poet has happily expressed it, as if “ their currish spirit governed a wolf, who longed for human slaughter ; even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet, and infused itself into them, for their desires are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous.” It is ignorance, not knowledge, that the wise man dreads, whether on Scriptural or other subjects ; and they look anxiously forward to the time, when the same rules of inquiry and reasoning will be applied in morals as in physical science. It is shameful to fetter the human mind, and make it bow down to creeds and systems—creeds of human invention in times of barbaric ignorance, and systems, revolutions to common sense, established by fraud, falsehood, and treachery, and now supported by them. No truth in moral science is more clear than this, that it is ignorance and error, not knowledge and right reason, which renders individuals full of fancies and apprehensions—robs them of their usefulness, and gives them over, bound hand and foot by their own slavish fears, to the cunningly bold, who triumph in their weakness,—as observed by Andrew Combe, M.D. in his *Principles of Physiology*, “ If, indeed, ignorance were itself a preventive of danger, or could provide a remedy when it approached, then it might be said, that ‘ ignorance is bliss ;’ but as it gives only the kind of security, which shutting the eyes affords against the dangers of a precipice, and, consequently, leaves its victim doubly exposed, it is high time to renounce its friendship and protection,

and to seek those of a more powerful and beneficent ally. If ignorance could divest us, even of the sense of anxiety attending the apprehension of evil, the consequent tranquility of mind, deceptive though it were, would be, at least, some compensation for submitting to its rule. But, unhappily, so far from ignorance of the nature and extent of the threatening danger saving us from gloomy anticipations, the fact is notoriously the reverse ; *for the darkest picture ever drawn, is assuredly that devised by an unenlightened imagination.*' Let us, therefore, heed not the stupid and canting cry about the danger of inquiry, the evils of knowledge, and the happiness of ignorance ; but persevere in the great work of social, political, and religious reform ; examine boldly and calmly, that the chaff of human opinions may be separated from the wheat of fact and philosophy ; all of which is the proper object of human reason, that cannot more nobly employ itself than in the destruction of idolatry, physical and moral, the worship of idols, whether those idols be gods, devils, angels, or men ; for all worship is slavish, fearful, and most irrational, having its root in folly, and the degradation of spirit to which fear ever gives birth. The virtue of the fearful man is not to be relied upon, it is a virtue which, "like wax, melts in its own fire ;" but enough of fear and the fearful, for we write to the courageous, not to the cowardly—to the philosophic, not to the faithful—to the inquirer, not to the taker upon trust—to the man of science, not to the man of imaginings—in short, to the man who seeks for truth, that his reason may be strengthened and his heart purified,—not the man who refuseth the truth when it alarms his fears, weakens and corrupts his reason instead of strengthening it, and hardens his heart by a soul-debasing superstition. In the words of Solomon, "Every prudent man *dealeth with* knowledge ; but a fool layeth open his folly. Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction ; but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured."

We shall not stop here to combat the absurd opinion, (once deemed incontrovertible, but now abandoned by all Christians who make the slightest pretensions to knowledge,) that the Bible is an infallible book, an unerring guide, even though the literal interpretation should be admitted as genuine ; though by the way there are almost as many interpretations as divine interpreters, and as many divine interpreters as parsons, each claiming to be *the* man who alone can explain the deep and hidden meaning of the sacred volume ; we say, to combat the argument of infallibility, will be

displaying our valour, and using what strength we have to very little purpose, as we repeat, the point is now given up; and we are told by orthodox divines, that the Bible is full of errors, "errors that cannot be numbered," which is certainly startling to those who think that the word of God is immutable, unchangeable, like himself, without change or shadow of turning; and, though not ourselves over orthodox, or righteous overmuch, we are compelled to declare our conviction, that if God had spoken to man, intending him not only to hear but to understand, he would have used a language as clear, as immutable, and eternal, as the truths he intended to convey; but the Bible is not written in such a language, as will appear from the following note, copied from Evans's Sketches of the Denominations of the Christian World: "Our English translation of the Bible was made in the time, and by the appointment of James the First. According to Fuller, the list of translators amounts to forty-seven. This number was arranged under six divisions, and several parcels of the Bible assigned them. Every one of the company was to translate the whole parcel, then they were to compare them together, and when any company had finished their part, they were to communicate it to the other companies, so that nothing should pass without the general consent. The names of the persons and places where they met, together with the portions of Scripture assigned each company, are to be found in Johnson's Historical Account of the Several Translations of the Bible. These good and learned men entered on their work in the spring of 1607, and three years elapsed before the translation was finished. From the mutability of language, the variations of customs, and the progress of knowledge, several passages in the Bible require to be newly translated, or to be materially corrected. Hence, in the present age, when Biblical literature has been assiduously cultivated, different parts of the sacred volume have been translated by very able hands. *The substituting a new translation of the Bible in the room of the one now in use, has been much debated.* Dr. Knox in his ingenious essays, together with others, argue against it; whilst Dr. Newcombe, the late Lord Primate of Ireland, the late Dr. Geddes, of the Catholic persuasion, and the late Rev. Gilbert Wakefield, contended strenuously for it. The correction of several passages, however, would deprive Deists of many of their objections, prevent Christians from being misled into some absurd opinions, and be the means of making the Scriptures more intelligible, and consequently more beneficial to the world."

Here then, we have from Christians themselves, the important admission, that from the mutability of language, the variation of customs, and the progress of knowledge, several passages of the Bible require to be newly translated, or to be materially corrected; in spite of the great care of the forty-seven learned and holy men, time and change has changed the unchangeable word of God. After forty-seven wise heads, aided as they doubtless were by the holy spirit, had laboured for three long years *sans* intermission, we are now gravely told, not by Jews, Infidels, Deists, or Atheists, but such good and learned Christians as Dr. Newcombe, late Lord Primate of Ireland, the late Dr. Geddes, and Dr. Wakefield, that we must, if we would save our souls, substitute a new translation of the Bible in the room of the one now in common use; the text is to be reformed altogether, say these worthies, in the face of the threat held out against all innovators and uncereemonious liberty-takers with Scriptural texts, "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar;" in the face of all this—in spite of the hurricane of passion which threatened to blow them into eternity, the above divines had the effrontery to persist, that the present version is little better than a forgery—that an entirely new translation must be made, or if they attempt to mend the old one, they propose to do it as the Irishman mended his gun, with a new stock, lock, and barrel.

The writer's gentle insinuation that "the correction of several passages would deprive Deists of many of their objections, prevent Christians from being misled into some absurd opinions, and be the means of making the Scriptures more intelligible, and consequently more beneficial to the world," is really racy, rich, and highly suggestive. The idea of appealing to revelation as a standard by which all opinions are to be measured, regulated, and determined, which reason must bend and submit to as being its superior, and then to propose the correction or mutilation of several passages in order to meet the cavils of Deists and others, is worthy of a Bedlamite, and should give the proposer the crown of folly—a crown so heavy, that, like the crook-backed tyrant Gloster, he might exclaim, "By heaven! the massive weight out galls my laden brow." Why the plain truth is, that if Christians re-translate and exclude from the Bible all that rationalists or reasoners carp and cavil at, there will not be a single page left, and the word of God would dwindle down into two pasteboard covers—a volume constructed after the manner of a back-gammon board, well bound

and marked "Bible" on the outside—but full of nought but emptiness! Yes, rationalists would find a flaw in every page—of course, we mean those rationalists who would be so irrational as to take as the letter that which is figurative—an allegory for a matter of plain and sober history. A knowledge of this double character of the Bible would, indeed, deprive Deists of many of their objections, prevent Christians from being misled into some absurd opinions, and be the means of making the Scriptures more intelligible, and consequently more beneficial to the world. We thank the Christian writer for such admirable sentiments—we thank him for teaching us those words, and shall endeavour to profit by them ourselves, and enable our readers to go and do likewise,—for who does not see that when the "forty-seven" passed with such general consent such grossly absurd passages as the following, they gave a mortal stab to their system of religion,—for though religion cannot be destroyed, all systems of religion may, if they be lying systems, "as a lie cannot live;" so that those who systematise religion should be careful lest they stumble, and in building their state-theologic house, they take or mistake not "bricks for stone, and slime for mortar." In the first chapter of Genesis we read, "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night: and the evening and the morning were the first day." Then we read, same chapter, "And the evening and the morning were the third day. And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, for seasons, for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also." Here we have a strange confusion of ideas—a strange jumble of all sorts of nonsense—when taken literally. The style of the above passage has been much commended; and Longinus the great critic, has said that the expressions "Let there be light, and there was light," are sublime. Perhaps so; but however sublime in style, it is extremely silly in matter; for how God could say—Let there be light, and see the light that it was good, and call the light day, and the darkness night, before he had made the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—how, in short, taking a common-sense view of the subject, could

there have been an evening or a morning, a night and a day, without sun, moon, or stars? Again we read in the 27th verse of the same chapter, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; *male and female created he them*;" and in the second chapter we read, 21st verse, "And the Lord God caused a great sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and he closed up the flesh instead thereof;" so that, after creating them male and female, it afterwards appears, according to the text, that the man was first created and slept, and the Lord God gently took out one of his ribs, closed up the flesh thereof, and of the rib made a woman. No one doubts the power of Deity to act in this or any other unaccountable manner; and nothing could have been more easy than for God to have so acted, if he desired so to do; nor is it any thing wonderful to the people of this age, that a rib should be taken from a man without his own knowledge; for the disciples of Mesner, by Mesnerizing and throwing their patients into a very strange kind of sleep, can cut off breasts, legs, and even heads, without the patient wincing a tittle, and surely God may have mesnerized or magnetized Adam, and done all related in the text without difficulty; but it is quite impossible that God could have created man in his own image,—in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them, as stated in the 1st chapter and 27th verse, and afterwards say, as is set down in the 2nd chapter and 18th verse, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him;" but this little confusion is a *trifle*. In the 23rd verse and 24th of the 2nd chapter, there is something more—another *trifle*; but as it has been well observed, that trifles mark men's characters, trifles also mark the character of books; for Adam is further made to say by the *forty-seven*, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." This is strange logic, and Adam must have been a strange logician; but as it is presumed, that before the fall he had not studied the art of reasoning, he must have spoken, if he spoke at all, by intuition; because, although he may, by some means unknown to us, have come to the knowledge that his fair companion was one of his own ribs; by what strange, incontrovertible process of reasoning (though he could hardly have reasoned before the fall) he came to the conclusion, because the woman was taken out of him, "*therefore* should

a man leave his father and mother, and should cleave unto his wife, and they should be one flesh." The difficulty which besets all this is greatly increased when we reflect that Adam could not *then* have known any thing about a man's leaving his father and his mother, and clinging unto his wife, any more than an Exeter-change ourang-outang can know what is passing at this moment in the planet Jupiter !

As we proceed with our examination of the book of Genesis, the necessity of *rationalizing* the Bible,—in other words, giving as far as possible the *true explanation of its contents*, will be admitted by all ; and it is idle for sectarians to say, that they scout all mere opinions, all creeds of human invention, and take the Bible for their guide ; for when they speak of the Bible, they cannot mean a certain number of leaves, with a certain number of characters marked thereon, bound in calf and gold ; no, they must mean (if they mean any thing) the truths that it contains, the dogmas it enforces, in short, the sum total of its history, its morality, and its dogmas ; but if no two of those who read the Bible, attach the same meaning to its contents, a thousand individuals, each interpreting the Scripture in his own manner, might all proclaim that they took the Bible for their guide, and yet their opinions be wide as the poles asunder—the very antipodes of each. And this right of private interpretation, is what must be granted to the improved and improving spirit of the age—it demands that, and will be content with nothing less ; any thing short of the full right of all individuals to interpret, as best they may, the Bible, or any other books, is a most unjust and irrational interference with liberty of conscience, and that right of private judgment so strenuously insisted upon by the first Protestants and the Dissenters of the present day,—those among them, more especially, who have as yet obtained little political power. The Protestants cry aloud "The Bible, the Bible—we say the Bible only is the religion of Protestants : " perhaps so ; and if the Protestants can find their religious sentiments and feelings embodied and proclaimed in the Bible, they act but consistently if they make their lives and actions harmonize with its injunctions ; but let not those who *do* find their religion in the Bible hate and persecute those who *do not* ; nor should those who give one reading, or one interpretation to its contents, fine or throw into a dungeon those who give an *unfashionable* reading, or interpret disagreeably to the great monster called public orthodoxy.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 19. WEEKLY. ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

Before proceeding further with our explication of the book of Genesis, it may be useful to correct an error which has been going the round of the press. The error to which we allude is an important one; and seems to have arisen out of an observation made by us to the effect, that we did not deny that one or fifty Christs may have walked about the streets of Jerusalem, any more than we deny that one or fifty Herculeases may have existed in Phenecia, Egypt, or Greece, which observation has been strangely enough construed into an admission that Jesus Christ actually existed, as contended by ecclesiastical and other historians; which is certainly a most extraordinary conclusion for any intelligent reader to arrive at, as the slightest reflection must convince all, that in disproving the existence of Jesus Christ as a human being, it was not the existence of a Christ that we offered to disprove, but *the* Jesus Christ conceived by the power of the holy-ghost, born of a virgin in Judea, who, after having performed many miracles and wonders, was crucified by Pontius Pilate, and according to the fable, or history, suffered a glorious resurrection, in the same way that when proving that the grand Hercules, worshipped by the Greeks as the son of Jupiter and Alcemene, was but a mere personification of the Sun; we do not deny (indeed it would be most foolish to do so) that a

man or men called Hercules once existed in Greece. The object of these Letters is to disprove the belief in the Jesus Christ worshipped by Christians; and when that is accomplished, few will care whether any men in former times bore the name of Christ. Dozens of men called Adonis may have lived in Phenecia, but then, Adonis was no less a personification of the Sun, that is, *the* Adonis whom fabulists have told us was beloved of Venus, &c. It may be useful here to re-state that we have not, nor do we intend to examine whether the Christian religion is or is not a revealed religion,—for the philosophy of these times has progressed too far, and taken too firm a hold upon the mind of men, to permit that they should longer dream or dispute about the communications of Deity with man—save only those which result from the light of reason and the contemplation of nature; nor shall we *yet* examine whether an impostor or philosopher called Christ established the religion called Christian,—all this will be considered in due time; but we may observe that even though this last article should be accorded, that a man of consummate ability, prudence, and determination, played a part among the Jewish people, more or less in harmony with the received history, yet Christians would not be satisfied therewith, for they worship a man-god, a divine incarnation, a real flesh-and-blood-deity, in the image of man, who descended from the heavens to bear our iniquities!—"a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" but we are far from being so condescending as to admit, for the sake of conciliating the favour of Christian theologians, that such things were: and as to those who will be content that we should destroy the divine character of Christ, and make of him simply a philosopher, or a man, without attaching to him a divine character,—that question we candidly invite them to consider when our Analysis of the Christian Mythos is brought to a close,—no matter when or by whom it was established—whether, as before remarked, it owe its origin to one or many men—whether its origin date from the reign of Augustus or Tiberius, as the modern legend seems to indicate, and as is vulgarly believed,—or whether it may boast a much higher antiquity for its source, namely, the Mithriac worship, established in Persia, in Armenia, in Cappadocia, and even at Rome, as *we* think. The point is, however, not very important,—but it is important to know thoroughly the nature of the Christian worship, whoever may have been its author, and wherever it may have first taken root.

The impiety and gross irrationality of interpreting literally the

book of Genesis was dwelt upon in our last ; and in insisting that the letter of the Scripture kills, and the spirit vivifies, we only followed in the footsteps of the most eminent Jewish and Christian writers, who were too learned not to see the absurdity, and therefore impiety, of such an interpretation. Origine, the great champion of the Christians, attributed to the Scripture a triple sense, as it appears in conformity with his notion of a triple division in human nature,—the first sense literal, and answering to the body ; the second moral, answering to the soul ; the third mystical, and answering to the spirit or mind : but, as observed by STRAUSS, in his *Life of Christ*, “ Nevertheless, he left generally these three kinds of sense, to subsister the one by the side of the other, although he gave to them different values ; but in particular cases he pretends that the literal explication *either gives no sense or one that is outrageously absurd*, so that the reader may be pricked or excited to discover the mystical or hidden sense. We must, without doubt, understand that the literal sense is far inferior, and therefore less useful, than that which is concealed, and more profound, if, as Origine repeats in many parts of his works, that the Biblical recitals, when understood, teach not old fables, but admirable advice how to live in justice and in truth, when he sustains that the purely literal sense *will lead to the ruin of the Christian religion.*” Here, then, is a serious dilemma, upon one or other of the horns of which the Christians must be placed, *which* they will prefer being gored and tossed by, it is not for us to determine,—but most serious is their position ! The literal interpretation, according to Origine, will lead to the ruin of the Christian religion,—and we insist that any other than a literal interpretation will equally ruin the Christian religion ! so that, ruined, theological Christian professors must be, whichever course they may choose to take,—we say, Christian professors will be ruined—who support any religion that will support them ; and as to the people, they will be far more religious when there shall be no professors of religion in existence ; but the Christian scheme has no other foundation—no other conceivable basis—than a literal interpretation of the book of Genesis,—to allegorize that book—to make of it a tissue of fables, is to allegorize and make fabulous all that is written about a redemption from sin and misery through the blood of Christ, and to show there has been no fall, no redemption, no real garden of Paradise, no birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

The tree of Christianity has its root in the soil of Paradise, or no where. Now, a tree without a root would be an odd tree—such

a kind of tree would be the tree of Christianity, if what is related of the garden of Paradise be not true to the letter; and if it be contended that to talk about a tree without a root is an absurdity, we reply by asking, whether to talk about a redemption without a fall is not equally absurd? Christ, we are told, came to redeem the world. From what? Why sin and misery, which sin and misery was a consequence of the fall, according to Genesis, chapter 1st, where we read, that "After God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God saw every thing that he had made; and behold, *it was very good*. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Afterwards we find, in the second chapter, if we literally interpret the text, that though all was good, "The Lord God said, *It is not good* that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him." Then comes the tale, worthy to find a place in the Arabian tales of the thousand and one nights, about a great disorder introduced into the world by a serpent, who invites the woman Eve to gather the forbidden fruit; but it will be better to give it as it stands in chapter third, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

The grievous fault of our first parents, according to the text, as interpreted, was punished by all the evils inseparable from a knowledge of good and evil; for before the commission of this fatal act, the knowledge of Adam and Eve must have been purely negative, —they only knew that they did not know, though how they came at even that kind of knowledge it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to determine. One of the greatest philosophers that ever lived,

declared that he only knew that he knew nothing,—so that he, after all his reasonings, after the fall, knew as much as Adam and Eve did by intuition, before the fall; though it must be confessed that the woman Eve's reply to the wily serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden," &c., has much of reason about it, and would lead us to imply or presume that she had some positive knowledge—else, how should she know one tree from another, or how, without a power of abstraction, could she compare together certain individual roots, trunks, and branches,—note their points of similarity or dissimilarity, agreement or disagreement, and include them all under the general term trees?

In the book of Genesis, therefore, we must look for the fundamental dogma of the Christian religion; for even in the opinions of Christians themselves, the incarnation of Christ was necessary, because the serpent had not subtly and insidiously seduced the first woman called Eve, "because she was the mother of all living." Like the Siamese twins, these two dogmas are held together by what may be called a natural fastening; a forcible separation of the twins of Siam would probably have been fatal to both, and any theological doctor who attempts to cut the gordian knot which ties the sin of man through Adam, to the redemption through Jesus Christ, must fail; or should he succeed, he will certainly destroy the existence both of Adam and of Christ; no sin—no reparation; no fall—no redemption!

But the fall of man, or the supposition of the double state of man, at first created by God, or the good principle, enjoying all the delights of this glorious world, and afterwards passing under the dominion of the serpent Satan, Devil, or bad principle, and to a state of misery and degradation, from which he could not be saved or withdrawn but by the good deity, the principle of good or of light, is merely a cosmogonic fable, of precisely the same nature as those made by the Magi, or priests of Persia, upon Ormusd and Ahrimanes,—to which fable we have already called the attention of our readers. We say, all that is related in the book of Genesis with regard to Adam, Eve, and the Serpent, is a cosmogonic fable, of the same character as that taught by the priests of Mithra, or rather, that the fable of Genesis was copied from the Persian books, where we find that the Magi were accustomed to represent the world under the emblem of an egg divided into twelve parts, six of which parts belonged to Ormusd, the god, author of good and of light, and six to Ahrimanes, author of all evil and of darkness.

These two books also treat of the combined action of these two principles, and how the good and the evil of nature resulted therefrom.

That dogma of the two principles presiding over and governing all nature, was not peculiar to the Persian cosmogonist; but, as Plutarch has properly observed, was the basis of all theologies,—to which he adds, that “It is not necessary to believe that the principles of the universe may be inanimate bodies, as Democritus and Epicurus seemed to imagine,—nor that a matter without quality was organized and ordained by one only reason, or providence, mistress of all things, as said by the Stoics; for it is not possible that one only being, good or bad, could have been the cause of all things, as God, if good, could not have been the cause of evil. The harmony of this world is a combination of contraries, as the cords of a lyre, or the strings of a harp, which bend and unbend. Never, as the poet Euripides has wisely said, is good separated from evil, there is—there must be a melange, or mixture, containing the one and the other. That opinion upon the two principles (continues Plutarch) is from all antiquity; it has passed from the theologians and the legislators, to the poets and the philosophers. Its author is not known, but the opinion is substantiated and proved by the traditions of the human race; it is consecrated by the mysteries and the sacrifices with the Greeks and with the barbarians. Every where has been and is acknowledged the dogma of the two principles, opposed in their nature, which by their contrariety, produce the melange of good and evil **we every** where behold. It is ridiculous to suppose that there is one dispensator only, who draws events as a liquor in two casks, in order to mix them together and give to us the mixture; for nature produces nothing here below which has not both the good and the evil. But it is necessary to acknowledge two contrary causes—two opposing powers—the one carrying towards the right—the other towards the left, and which govern thus our lives and all the sublunary world, which by that reason, is subject to so many changes and alterations, and irregularities of all kinds; for as no effect can be produced without a cause, and if the good cannot be the cause of the bad, it is absolutely necessary that there should be a cause for evil and a cause for good.”

It will at once be perceived from the last phrase of Plutarch, that the true origin of the dogma of the two principles is to be found in the difficulty that men have had in all time to reconcile their knowledge, that misery abounds with the opinion they would wil-

lingly have entertained—that a benevolent, all-wise, and all-powerful Deity, held in his hand the universe, and weighed as in a balance the destinies of men. If, said they, God be all-powerful and benevolent, why does moral evil exist? and if he is not all-powerful, he must be controlled and thwarted in his good intentions by some evil spirit, less benevolent but no less powerful than himself. The supposition of one supreme cause could not explain away the existence of evil, nor satisfactorily account for it; and the two opposing effects led them to infer two opposing causes, antagonistic in their nature and in their actions. That dogma, adds Plutarch, “has been generally received by all people, and above all by those who have had the highest reputation for wisdom. They have all admitted two Gods, of different talents—if the expression may be permitted to me—one of whom delighteth to do good, the other delighteth to do evil; and between the two we have all the evil that exists in the world. To the first is given the title of God, and to the other, that of Devil or Demon.”

In the *cosmogony*, or *Genesis of the Hebrews*, we see the same two principles—the one called God, the author of all excellence, who exclaims, after his daily toils, that he sees this that he has made is good, “And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas; and God saw that it was good,” &c.; and after him comes another principle, called Demon, or Devil, or Satan, who corrupts the good the first has made, and introduces evil, death, and sin, among the human family; for though the serpent was much honored by the *Judiens* and *Egyptians*, and symbolized with them as wisdom and eternity, with the *Jews* the serpent was despised and held in abomination; indeed, almost all those things held in veneration by the *Egyptians* as symbolical of physical or moral phenomena, were execrated by the *Jews*, who were peculiar people, with very confined notions of things, and were, in consequence, filled with antipathy and groundless prejudice against the customs and manners of other nations, whose gods they were taught to abhor, whose altars they were commanded to throw down, and whose people they were bidden to put to the edge of sword. So that we need not wonder that the serpent, so much venerated by the *Egyptians*, should have been despised by the *Jews*, and in their *cosmogony* made the symbol of the spirit of evil or of darkness. The *cosmogony* itself, we wish our readers to bear in mind, was copied from the ancient *cosmogony* of the *Persians*, as may be seen by a reference to their books. All

the dogmas usually attributed to Moses were; in fact, borrowed from the books of Zoroastre, who equally admitted two principles,—according to Plutarch, the one called Oromaze and the other Ahrimanes. The Persians say of the first, that he was of the nature of light; and of the other, that he was of the nature of darkness. With the Egyptians, the first was called Osiris, and the second Typhon—eternal enemy of the first.

All the sacred books of the Persians and the Egyptians, contain marvellous recitals and strange allegories respecting the divers combats that Ahrimanes and his angels delivered to Oromaze, and that Typhon delivered to Osiris. These fables have been repeated by the Greeks in the wars of the Titans and Giants with feet in the form of serpents, against Jupiter, or against the principle of good or of light; for Jupiter, in the theology of the Greeks, as Plutarch very well observes, “answers to the Oromaze of the Persians, and the Osiris of the Egyptians.

To these examples, cited by Plutarch, which are drawn from the theology of the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Chaldeans, many more might be added in justification of what is here advanced as to the belief so generally spread, that the universe is under the dominion of two rural chiefs, who are eternally struggling for mastery, and that this dogma belongs to all theologies.

The people of Madagascar acknowledge the two principles; they give, like the Jews, to the bad, the attributes of the serpent. They call the good principle Jadhar, or the great God, all-powerful, and the bad principle they call Angat; but, like the Christians, though they make their God all-powerful, they say he has either not the power or the will to destroy Angat, or, as we call him, the Devil; but neither the priests of Madagascar nor the priests of Europe can afford to destroy the devil—his services are so valuable and necessary to the welfare of governments and religions—that is, governors and theologians, that they cannot possibly be dispensed with. The people of Madagascar, of Pegu, of Java, and the Hottentots, pray not at all to the good deity—he, they consider, is quite good enough to do without it,—so that, the very reason given by Christians why we should pray to God, is the self-same reason why the Madagascars and others, think we should not,—so true it is that

Custom and fancy oft our fate decide;
And what is this man's shame is 'tother's pride.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 20. WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

In Genesis we read (chapter 1, v. 31)—"And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." (Chap. 2, v. 1, 2) "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." These texts require some explanation.

Time, says the author of the Boundesh, or Genesis of the Persians, is in all, twelve thousand years; the six thousand of God include the signs of the lamb, the bull, the twins, the lion, and the virgin, making six thousand years; for the Persians supposing, that from time without bounds, or from eternity, arose a certain limited period, which, however, renewed itself unceasingly; they divided such period in twelve thousand parts, that in the eastern style of allegory, they named years. Six thousand of these periods or years, they said, belonged to God or the good principle, and the other six, to the Devil or bad principle—or as they call them, Ormusd and Ahrimanes. And, in order that their meaning might not be mistaken, the Persian priests made each of these divisions, or each of these thousand parts, answer to one of the signs through which the Sun passes, or seems to pass, during the earth's annual revolution.

The first month, say they, answers to the lamb, the second to the bull, the third to the twins, &c. It is under the six first signs, or under the six first months of the equinoxial year, that they celebrate the reign of the beneficent Deity, or the principle of light; and it is under the other six signs that they place the action of the malevolent Devil, or the principle of darkness; and it is at the seventh sign, answering to the balance, or the first of the autumnal signs, the season of fruits, when the colds of winter penetrate in our hemisphere, that they say, commenced the reign or empire of darkness and of evil.

The reader will remark, that it is after the season of fruits that the genius of evil, according to the cosmogony of the Persians, spreads in the world his fatal and most terrible influence, covering one half of the globe as with a veil of mourning, converting its fluids into solids, and making of these one stiffened heap—disorganizing the plants, &c. It is then that man discovers the evils of which he was ignorant during the spring and the summer, in the delicious climates of the northern hemisphere.

The supreme God, according to the writer of the *Modinel el Tawarik*, in the beginning created man and the bull in an elevated place, where they remained three thousand years without evil. These thousands of years included the lamb, the bull, and the twins. They then remained yet three thousand more years upon the earth without enduring pain or contradiction, and these three thousands answer to the cancer or crab, the lion, and the virgin. Here then, we have the six thousands spoken of above, under the name of thousands of Gods, and the zodiacal signs affected to God, or the good principle.

After that, at the seventh sign, answering to the balance, evil appeared, and man commenced to till the soil, or, in the language of Genesis, the curse was pronounced; (chap. 3, v. 19) "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

In another part of the Persian cosmogony it is said, that all the duration of the world, from its commencement to its termination, has been fixed at twelve thousand years; that man on the superior portion of the globe, that is to say, in the northern and superior hemisphere, lived without evil for three thousand years. He was without evil for yet another three thousand years, when Ahrimanes, or the spirit of evil, appeared, who drew all sorts of evils and wars

and pestilence in the seventh thousand, that is to say, under the sign of the balance, upon which is placed the celestial serpent. Then was produced the mixture of good and evil, of happiness and misery.

Man had thus far been favored by the Deity, as written (chap. 1, v. 28) "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Man was then good, not having plucked the fatal apple, (chap. 1, v. 31) "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." But, in the season of fruits, when the wily serpent, or serpent of evil, introduced cold, sin, and death into the world—or when in the mystical language of Genesis, (chap. 3, v. 22) "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, *to know good and evil,*" &c. "Therefore, (chap. 3, v. 23, 24) the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Or in the language of the Persian allegorists, Ormusd had loaded man with all sorts of delights; but the god Ormusd had a wily rival in Ahrimanes, the prince of darkness, the most determined enemy to man, who poisoned the most precious of Ormusd's gifts; and to this chief of darkness man became the victim, at the moment when the Sun, or Ormusd, the great god of Day, retreats towards the southern climates. These long nights re-take their terrible empire, and the murderous breath of Ahrimanes, who appears under the form, or under the ascendant of the serpent of the constellations, carries devastation and misery into that Paradise, or garden of delights, in which Ormusd had placed man. Here then, we have the theological idea that the author of Genesis has taken from the cosmogony of the Persians. The idea is precisely the same, but the manner of setting it forth is agreeable to the different kind of genius of the two people. Whether the Persians were indebted for the idea to the people of any more ancient but now forgotten nation, cannot, perhaps, be satisfactorily determined; but it is certain, that the Hebrew books of Genesis is a mere copy, as regards the idea of the Boundesh, or Genesis of the Magi or Persian priests.

From what has been written, the conclusion is inevitable, that the evil introduced into the world is winter, and who from such evil

will be the Redeemer?—who, but the god of Spring, or the god Sun, in his passage under the sign of the Lamb, of whom Christ, the god worshipped by Christians, assumes all the forms, for he is the Lamb who repairs all the evils of the world, evils that the serpent introduced so subtilly in the garden of Paradise; and it is under the emblem of the Lamb that Christ is represented in the monuments of the first Christians.

It must be evident, that the whole story about the fall of man, relates to the periodical physical evil, of which every year the earth is the theatre, in consequence of the retreat of the Sun—that great source of life and light to all that breathes, moves, and has a being upon the surface of this globe. That cosmogonic tale is nothing more than an allegorical picture of the general phenomena of nature, and the particular influence of the celestial signs; for the serpent, or the great adder, the cause of sin and death, is the serpent of winter, which, as the Balance (one of the constellations) is placed upon the limits, or boundary-line, separating the empires of the two principles—in other words, upon the autumnal equinox. Here, we have the true serpent, of which Ahrimanes takes the form in the fable of the Magi, as in the fable of the Jews, to introduce evil into the world; also, the Persians call that malevolent genius, the *Serpent Star*, and the celestial serpent, the *Serpent of Eve*. The following is from the Boundesh or Genesis of the Persians, “Ahri-manes, or the principle of darkness and of evil, that power by whom sin comes into the world, is seen in the sky, under the form of a great adder, accompanied by all kinds of evils and bad geniuses, who search only to destroy.” It also observes, “When bad geniuses desolate the world, and that the *serpent star* marks out for itself a course between the sky and the earth, that is to say, mounts upon the horizon,” &c.

Now, the epoch of the annual revolution of the celestial serpent, when united to the Sun, he mounts upon the horizon with that star, is, when the Sun arrives at the Balance, where the constellation of the serpent extends itself, that is, at the seventh sign, setting out from the Lamb, or that sign under which it has been shewn, the Magi fixed the commencement of the reign of the bad principle, and the origin of evil in the universe.

In the Hebrew Genesis the same expressions are not employed as in that of the Persians; but the Genesis of the ancient Tuscans is, in all the rest, conceived in precisely the same terms as that of the Hebrews, and has conserved that allegorical division of time

spoken of in the Persian Genesis, during the which, the powerful action of the Sun, or soul of nature, is exercised. In the books of the ancient Tuscans it is thus expressed :

“ The God, Architect of the Universe, has employed and consecrated twelve thousand years to the works that he has produced; and he has divided them in twelve times, distributed in the twelve signs, or houses of the Sun. During the first thousand, he made the sky and the earth. During the second, the firmament that he called the sky. During the third, he made the sea and the waters, which flow upon and through the earth. During the fourth, he made the two great lights of nature. During the fifth, he made the souls of birds, of reptiles, quadrupeds, and all animals which live in the air, upon the earth, and in the waters. During the sixth, he made man.” “ It seems (adds the author) that the first six thousand years having preceded the formation of man, the human race should subsist for the other six thousand years;” so that all the time, from the commencement to the consummation of that great work, may be enclosed within a period of twelve thousand years.

If the Christian doctors who argue so profoundly against the validity of argumentation, when religion is in question, who are wonderfully industrious in shewing reasons why reason should not be used—if the fathers of the church, who were nothing less than philosophers, could not, with all their disposition to believe, swallow and digest such gross absurdities, nor explain the book of Genesis without recurring to allegory—if nought but the key of allegory could open the closet where the true sense of Scripture lay concealed—if they found that to interpret literally was to shock reason and cover the Sacred Books with ridicule,—surely it will be permitted to us, who, living in an age boasting of its enlightenment, and feeling that it is better and nobler that men should be good reasoners rather than good believers, to shew the true character of such marvellous histories—give to them their true interpretation, and raise or tear aside the veil of allegory which conceals their moral beauty. Yes, let us follow in the footsteps of Origines, one of the most learned writers of whom the Christians can boast, who boldly declares the book of Genesis to be a book of absurdities—when literally interpreted, or when read by those who do not, or cannot, understand that there is a hidden and a revealed meaning in Scriptural passages—a literal and a figurative sense. That doctor, after ridiculing the idea that the tree of life in the garden of Paradise was a real sensible tree, which had the virtue of conser-

ving life, &c., continues, and compares the fable of the temptation of Adam to the fable related about the birth of love, who, it is related, had for his father, Porus or abundance, and poverty for his mother,—he sustains that a very large portion of the Old Testament is fabulous—that what is there related to have taken place, could not by possibility have happened, and are therefore nothing more than fictions which conceal certain secret truths.

As to those who are content to acknowledge in Christ a Redeemer God, and yet cannot believe in the adventure of Adam and Eve, the serpent, the wonderful tree, and the fall of man, which alone gave birth to the necessity of a Redeemer, we charge them with inconsistency,—and cannot see by what means they can escape from or rebut the charge. If no fault was committed by Adam—if there never was a Paradise, or a talking serpent, or a real tree of good and evil—how could the Lord God have driven Adam out of a garden which never existed?—or how should he put enmity between the serpent and the woman, if no such serpent existed?—or how should he inflict misery and death, as a punishment of the human race, in consequence of the sin of Adam and Eve—if Adam and Eve were not real personages? If the facts were not as the text of Genesis announces, what confidence can be placed in an author who deceives in his very first page, and an author, too, whose work serves as a basis to the religion of the Christians? Verily, the religion built upon such a foundation must be unstable indeed! If those who support old orthodoxy are reduced to the necessity of acknowledging that there is a concealed sense, they will be compelled to recur to allegory, and we desire no more; it is indeed the only crime that Christians can charge us with. All that will then remain for theological critics to do, is simply to shew by sound argument and calm reasoning, that though an allegorical explication is necessary, yet that ours is not the true one,—and we have no wish to escape behind the text, “Judge not lest ye be judged”—*as we freely judge, we desire to be judged* by those who have well considered the whole subject, and are competent to the task; for we are far from desiring that our readers should have faith in, when they should rather freely canvass, our opinions. Texts have been cited—facts carefully collected—the phenomena of the heavens, and the origin of all systems of religion, searched into,—let those who can, and dare, bring forth other texts—other facts—explaining better the phenomena of the heavens, and shew that religions could have had any other origin than human igno-

rance,—and the consequent hopes, fears, and errors of men, any other basis than human misconceptions as to physical phenomena, and the causes of that phenomena,—religious feeling, which at first must have been a sentiment, not a calculation, was no sooner systematized than it was corrupted. Religion is not a science, that it may be reduced to system, but a sentiment springing out of human contemplations of the mysteries of things. Nature speaks to man with a most miraculous organ, but few ever hear—none can entirely comprehend her; and, however melancholy may be the reflection, it is nevertheless true, that men are violent in their advocacy of theories and systems, whether of religion or politics, in the ratio of their ignorance; and it is manifestly true, that all religion is based upon opinion merely—opinion too, which, like the waves of the great Atlantic, is in never ceasing motion,—yet do men who truly have “*madmen within them*,” foolishly aim at producing a dead-sea stillness—forgetting that stagnant opinions, like stagnant waters, always engender corruption.

We shall now take leave of the garden of Paradise, its mystical tree of good and evil, and its no less mystical serpent,—feeling that enough has been written to satisfy any *considering* mind, that if we would get at the meaning of what is contained in the book of Genesis, we must not stop at the literal sense, which is most absurd, contradictory, and (if any thing can be) most degrading to Deity. As observed by Dr. Strauss, in his Introduction to “*The Life of Jesus*,” “*Divine things could not have been thus performed, or things thus performed could not have been divine*,” but that Doctor, while he disputes the literal or naked sense now attached to the writings of Genesis by orthodox theologians, condemns equally the orthodox religionist and the theological rationalist; and as remarked by M. Lettré, “after condemning both these parties, he substitutes the opinions of the theologians who regard these recitals as mythosis, that is to say, as the production of the sentiments, ideas, and beliefs which predominated in the first Christian communities.” According to Strauss, Jesus having inspired during his life, and left after his death, the belief that he was the Messiah, and as the type of the Messiah already existed in the Sacred Books, and in the traditions of the Jewish people, there was formed among the first Christians a history of the life of Jesus, in which the particularities of his doctrine and of his destiny combined themselves with that type, which passed by successive modification down to the period when it was definitely fixed in the canonical Evangelists.

It will be seen from the above, that there is a wide gap between our teachings and those of our learned countryman, Strauss, to whom may be applied the words he has himself used when speaking of Origines: "he abstained from giving a greater extension to that mode of conception (the allegorical)—in part, because that he was himself engaged by his prejudices in the belief of the supernatural; in part, because that he feared to scandalise the orthodox Church:" but while truth compels us to declare highly against the want of nerve or moral stamina of the GREAT GERMAN,—yet it is but fair to state, that his great work, "*The Life of Jesus*," is, considered in a theological point of view, one of the most important that has issued from the press during the last century. Many of our readers have supposed "The Existence of Christ Disproved," was a mere re-print or translation of Strauss, which all will now have an opportunity of seeing *is not the fact*. The German Jew is now occupied with a translation of Strauss; and as his object is two-fold—first, to correct the erroneous notion as to "The Existence of Christ Disproved," being written by Strauss,—and, secondly, by publishing it in weekly numbers, to bring it within the reach—as it were, to the very doors—of the thinking among the poorer classes of society, who, had the translation been published in a volume, or volumes, would have been shut out from the incalculable benefits it is likely to bestow. The people must be enlightened—they must be freed from vain notions and superstitious fears, ere society can be purified, and each man be made a "law unto himself." How it happened that our readers and the press made the mistake of supposing that Dr. Strauss ever wrote a work disproving the existence, as a human being, of Jesus Christ, it is difficult to say; but probably they mistook the import of a remark contained in this work, "that the substance or marrow of Strauss' philosophy would appear in these Letters," &c.

Those who consult the translation (the first number of which has appeared) will soon discover in what we differ, and in what we agree; nor is it necessary to say more at present than that the translation shall be (as far as our abilities will enable us to make it) a faithful one—conveying in the simplest and clearest manner that our knowledge of the English language will permit, the sense and spirit of the author.

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LETTER 21.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The progress of civilization necessarily modifies the religious sentiments of individuals and nations; for religion, although a mere sentiment, having its origin and support in the explained action of Nature, and the wonder to which such mysterious phenomena give birth, it varies with the never-ceasing variations of human condition. Not only has every phase of civilization its corresponding and inseparable religious phase, but every step in the march of improvement—giving a higher tone to all the sentiments of man; that sentiment—called *religious*—cannot be excluded,—and equally with the rest, vibrates harmoniously with the spirit of the times. In vain may philosophers strive to separate intellectuality from sentimentality,—calling certain conditions in contradistinction to states of pure feeling; for though these two results of human organism may be, in order to help the human mind, considered as essentially distinct, there is, nevertheless, so far practically, a unity, that the one cannot be degraded or improved without the degradation or improvement of the other; the one cannot suffer or enjoy alone, or in a state of individualization—the one cannot exist without the other. As wise would it be to look at the first break of dawn for the full light of day—as the noon day of morality and the twilight of reason. The morality of nations may be considered

apart from what they know—but not as independent of it; for though our sentiments cannot properly be called our knowledge, they undoubtedly spring out of it,—the first giving birth, form, consistency, or in one word, character to the second. If this be, and we think the hypothesis will hardly be denied, it will appear, that the right use of reason, not confining these terms to a pedantic or merely logical sense, will not only largely contribute to moral progression, but is that alone which can develope or draw forth the germs of good, which, as the ice-bound flame, are latent in man.

These considerations open a new road for the free inquirer; as it will enable him to trace with precision, the cause and effect of religion, and how far it is dependant upon, or modified by, the advance of philosophy. It is evident, that the simple water-drinking Gentoo, whose sum of knowledge, though small, has made manifest to him, that to destroy life, or even to injure any living creature, is not good,—will, in his conception of powers more than human, or states of immortal existence, be regulated by the conclusions of his own mind—drawn from his intellectual resources. It is true, that in spite of his knowledge, the poor Gentoo may dream

Of Gods—passionate, revengeful, and unjust,
Whose attributes are—hate, revenge, and lust.

But thus it will be, in *spite* of his knowledge, which, borne down by the weight of terrors, has still an elastic spring, and eagle-like, tends to soar upwards—an eagle, however, without the necessary complement of feathers in its wing, for knowledge may properly be called humanity's wing, which only requires to be strengthened that it may soar with perfect safety upwards to the highest regions of speculation. The evil is not that men speculate *so much*, but it rather is that they know *so little*,—and mistaking their *speculations* for *realities*, they blindly fall into the deep and frightful abyss of pride and fanaticism. There is nothing absolutely hostile to human progression and universal happiness in the *religious sentiment*, which may, and will undoubtedly, receive a higher development, strengthening with the strength of reason, for the religious sentiment has its origin and support in the intellect of man, when contemplating the mysteriousness of things, and its own relationship to things, or *the thing* called universe; but, though it may be allowed, that there is nothing absolutely hostile to human progression and universal happiness in the religious sentiment, there is a *something* quite incompatible with human advancement, liberty, and

happiness, in a *religious system*, creed, or formulæ, based upon religious sentiment.

That the character of a religion and its usefulness is determined by the progress of just ideas, it seems hardly necessary to insist upon; but, because the reason of man considered in its totality, or as unit, gives the law to the religious sentiment, holds in check the vagrant imaginings, and *gives its own colour to the body of faith*; by that we must not be understood as admitting that religion is based upon just ideas, or the reason of things, for, as by the very terms reason and faith, we include the idea of *difference*, if not of *opposition*, it will be allowed that faith is not reason, and reason is not faith; hence, the expression of My Lord Verulam, "Give unto reason the things which are reason's, and unto faith the things which are faith's." The religious sentiment, say Christian writers, is indestructible; agreed; for *human ignorance is indestructible*, and human ignorance of the *how* and the *wherefore*, of the causes, existence, and the ends to which all tends, are subjects about which faith, as it employs itself, is manifest, that were there nothing mysterious in nature, there would be no belief or faith—which is simply the faculty to believe (if the paradox may be permitted), when more or less of doubt exists in the mind; for where there is no existence of doubt, there is no room for the exercise of faith, *which ceases when the mind is satisfied with its evidence, when opinion gives place to actual knowledge*. If, for example, men could see God, all *faith* in his existence would be destroyed, for they would not then believe in, but know him; and though it would be difficult for even an angel from heaven to say any thing, about which subtile spirits could not find occasion to dispute, it is nevertheless presumed, that none who saw, touched, and talked with such an angelic messenger, would say they *believed* they did those three things, namely, saw, touched, and talked with an angel, but simply declare their knowledge of the fact.

From the above reasoning, the legitimate conclusion is, that the religion of a nation, whether that nation be civilized or barbaric, is not the reason of such nation; for, as if by reason we understand the *just and true ideas of men*, which can only be determined as just or true, because they have facts, or absolute knowledge for their ground work, it follows, that the feelings of wonder, ever excited by that with which we are not familiar, is *the* support, the everlasting basis of all religion, which never can properly be called *rational*, because there is no standard by which a sentiment, with regard to the unknown, can be measured—no plummet and line by which we

can sound the depths of human imaginings ; and because it is inevitable, that to be familiar with, or to *know* a thing, is to destroy that sentiment which arises in the mind in consequence of our *ignorance* of it ; nor is it possible to wonder at that with which we are, in the full sense of the term, familiar ; and herein lies the error of Kant and other philosophers, who have made the singular blunder of supposing that religion, though a child of reason, could ever be a reasonable thing—erroneously conceiving, that as, the progress of reason always included the idea of a modification and a progression in religious sentiment, therefore, the belief, or the faith, to which such civilization gave birth must be rational ; whereas, a due consideration of the subject will lead to the conclusion, that a creature capable of reasoning *perfectly* upon all existences would cease to be *believing* ; for such a creature would *know* the origin, modifications, and secret springs of all things, and in his breast religion would cease to exist. Kant, in his Moral Interpretation of the Scripture, speaks of “ a sense which accords with the universal and practical laws of a pure rational religion.” Now, to speak of a rational religion, is to speak of rational imaginings, which, if we admit, we are not one step from a rational absurdity ; for what can be closer to the absurd than to call that rational which owes its existence to the very absence of materials whereon all reasoning must be based,—for man can reason without facts, or assumed facts ; but, in point of reality, it is not *reasoning* but *imagining*, which is the very source and spring of religion. When the Mexican king, who, according to Gemelli Carreri, on the consecration of a temple, caused six thousand four hundred and eight men to be sacrificed in four days—he, doubtless, *imagined* such a sacrifice would be acceptable to the gods, and, though he might, had he been called upon to do so, have given *reasons* why it was good so to act, nevertheless, the first assumption upon which all his subsequent reasonings were built was purely imaginary. He believed in the gods of his nation, and passed off his belief as positive knowledge,—for, as no man can by possibility *know* that a God or Gods exist, there being no science of God, such faiths, beliefs, or imaginings, can never rise to the dignity of knowledge—however they may dress themselves in the borrowed robes of certainty.

The fear expressed by many timid, though well-intentioned minds, lest, in destroying the Christian system of religion, a stab would be given to morality, is a vain fear,—for were Christianity swept away to-morrow, the religious principle would not—could not

be destroyed, it being eternal and indestructible, as far as human reason can be considered as eternal and indestructible. All religious creeds and all religious systems are of human invention—the work of human tongues and human hands, and the workman who buildeth can also pull down—what is produced by human energy can be destroyed by human energy ; nor does the virtue of this, or any other nation, repose upon its belief, but rather the belief rests upon and bears down the virtue. Let, therefore, all remember, that in attacking the superstitious belief in a crucified Saviour, called Jesus Christ, and disturbing that blind confidence called faith, that has spread itself over the Christian world for more than eighteen hundred years, we do not shake or weaken the props of morality, but strengthen and consolidate them. The old belief in Christ is a moral stigma, scouted by all who have caught a glimpse of the new order of ideas, and the glorious results that will arrive out of their full realization by society ; and, if it be thought, that for the preservation of order and the maintenance of the law, *a religion must be taught*, let it, at all events, be a religion making some pretensions to consistency, usefulness, and adaptability to the spirit of the times and the march of science ; but, while so much is conceded by us to the *fears* of men, we are not willing to grant so much to their *reason*,—for an appeal from human institutions to human nature, from the declamations of theologians to the arguments of facts, would decide against the long held, but most absurd opinion, that men, to be governed, must be deceived, and that it is easier to preserve order, contentment, and morality, by fraud and falsehood, than by the practice of truth and justice. Religion, we are told, ought to be made the ground-work of all education—its lessons should be interwoven with the whole tissue of instruction, and its principles should regulate the entire system of discipline in our national schools. Now, religion itself cannot be taught ; for who shall teach to another the vague, indefinite sentiments which arise out of his own relations with the universe ; nor can religious sentiments be systematized without being at the same time corrupted, and the only use of a system of religion is, to perpetuate error and delusion systematically, under cover of which, the vilest among men strengthen their authority, increase their wealth, and raise up barriers to the progress of the people in intelligence, virtue, and happiness.

Much is said about the necessity of filling the minds of the many with dreams and superstitious terrors, by those who value them as a sort of cheap police, deterring from the commission of crime.

Such writers seem hardly sensible of the superior efficacy of high moral teaching in repressing crime and inducing to virtue. To do right, because we love the right, and feel its value, is far better than to do right because we dare not do the wrong. The results in such a case are the same, but the dispositions, or states of mind, are the very antipodes of each other; and, if the belief in a terrible retribution tended to make man happy and virtuous, how happens it that the contrary holds? and that where systems of religion are received without inquiry or examination, and all difficulties vanish before the *ipse dixit* of the theologian, the people are invariably stupid, brutal, cruel, and unjust? whereas, many nations have existed, even though low in the moral scale, without any national faiths, and found ample protection in the laws and powers of the civil magistrate.

Herein we differ with De Wett, Kant, Strauss, and the Rationalists of Germany,—for they, not content with labouring to reduce to a reasonable standard the religious opinions of men which have incorporated themselves in human societies, but they most absurdly aim at rationalizing the religious sentiment—desiring to bring it within the grasp of reason, when, in truth, all know that *religion is religion because it is not science*. To try the reasonableness of a religious theory is useful; but any attempt to shew that the faith which grows out of ignorance, and the science which springs from actual experience of things, are identical—is misplaced labour—toiling to no purpose, save a mischievous purpose. To test the utility and consistency of the Bible, Vedan, Koran, or any other holy work, is to assist the cause of human progression, by opening the eyes of the intellectually blind to their true value; but any attempt to make it appear that one book is more holy than another—one history more sacred than another—is mere fraud—a species of moral swindling, only too prevalent in the world. Were the Bible and all other religious books destroyed to-morrow, religious systems might share in their destruction; but religion itself could not—for religious feeling has neither its source nor support in books, but in the human heart; religious feelings, we again repeat, are not necessarily rational; they may or may not be so, *for there is no standard or measure by which their reasonableness can be determined*; as the mind of man, never satisfied with the knowledge it hath, ever restless, impatient, and craving for more, stretcheth itself out into the pathless regions of speculation. Now, a speculation being a speculation, and not a legitimate result of logical deduction, it is not added to our treasure

of truth, but goes to swell the confused heap of imaginings. Religious sentiments as religious sentiments—speculations as speculations—are harmless; and it is only when men, backed by authority, and swollen by pride, insist upon their peculiar sentiments and imaginings being recognised as eternal truths, that they are pernicious and inimical to the happiness of man; but the religion which lays claim to reasonableness, must not shrink from rational inquiry; the book which contains the principles of such a systematized faith, should be open to all comers, and contain within itself, the proofs that will effectually overcome and destroy all opposition; the marks of its divinity should be plain and palpable, and, like those said to have appeared upon the body of Christ after his descent from the cross, carry with them their own evidence.

Not to dwell upon the admission of Strauss (Life of Jesus, 1st sec. p. 164) that “a Gallilean, of whom the genealogy was unknown, having acquired the renown of Messiah, it is easy to conceive that the legend of his descent from David, himself descended from Abraham, was developed under various forms, and that afterwards these legends served in the *manufacture* of such genealogies, the which not being founded upon authentic pieces, necessarily led to those divergences and contradictions into which Matthew and Luke have fallen;” not, we say, to dwell upon the important fact, that Matthew and Luke diverge from, and flatly contradict, each other in their sacred accounts of the genealogy of Jesus, the account of Abraham, “whose seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,” carries upon the face of it absurdity or falsehood; and it is vain that we are *told* that it is all true—though we cannot perceive its truth, —nay, though to us it appears false, for our being told does not prove it to us. When we read in Genesis, that “the Lord has fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife,” to us it appears just as absurd as though the Lord had placed a padlock on their mouths, because of some other old woman; *telling men* that such solemn nonsense was written by the finger of God, makes it no less nonsense; as well might Christians believe all the absurdities crowded into the pages of the Koran, because a fool, or an impostor, tells us it was written, as Alla commanded, by his Prophet Mahomet, with a feather plucked from the wing of the Angel Gabriel. As well remarked by Strauss, (Life of Jesus Intro. p. 68) “The faithful Mussulman believes that all truth is contained in the Koran, and sees only fables in the major part of the Bible; the Jew acknowledges not a divine history

in the Old Testament; he denies the divinity of the New. Now, who are reasonable of these parties? They cannot all be right, for their assertions contradict each other; but the which of them in particular is right? Each religious sect claims for itself the truth; the pretensions are equal. Who, then, will decide the origin of each religion? But each attributes to itself a divine origin. Not only the Christian religion lays claim to divinity through Christ the Son of God, but the Jewish religion through Moses, and also Mohammedanism puts in its claim as being founded by a prophet immediately inspired by God; nor did the Greeks attribute the institution of their worship to any but the Gods." So that, the tales told about Noah and Abraham are no more necessarily true than those we hear about Mahomet; and unless we are prepared to cast aside both reason and common sense, it is impossible to believe that such a person as Abraham ever existed.

The state of our paper warns us to conclude our present Letter, and at the same time inform our readers that this work will be completed in nine more numbers—making (with the Supplement) thirty-one; the next will conclude that part of our subject touching the real character of Abraham, and the remaining Letters will be occupied with a consideration (perhaps the most interesting of all to the general reader) whether the various histories of Christ, or the times in which he is said to have existed, as well civil as ecclesiastical, Christian or Pagan, will warrant our belief that a man called Christ performed any of the acts attributed to him by the Evangelists, or whether the Evangelical histories are not purely fictional, as asserted by us. *We have disproved his existence as a God, —it now remains to disprove his existence as a human being, which we have pledged ourselves to do.* That pledge shall be redeemed, or we will candidly acknowledge that we have commenced a task beyond our power to accomplish. The origin of the Christian religion, none of our careful readers can now mistake; the belief in a man-god, born of a virgin, must vanish before the evidence already adduced,—while the remaining portion of our work will, if we mistake not—shiver to atoms the whole fabric of the Christian fiction, and demonstrate that the belief in Christ is just as absurd as a belief in Jupiter, and that a man or god of that name no more rode on an ass into the streets of Jerusalem, than did Bacchus ride on an ass into the streets of Greece.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 22.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.*"—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

If you receive the Bible as your guide, you cannot believe that Abraham ever had a *literal* existence, as the Scriptures expressly declare (Gal. chap. 4, v. 24) that "*the things written concerning Abraham are an allegory*"—so, admitting that (2 Tim. chap. 3, v. 16) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," you cannot escape from the conclusion, that what is written in the Bible about Abraham is mere allegory and not a true history, fabulous traditions *booked* by the writer of the Sacred Volume, who declares (Hosea, chap. 12, v. 10) "*I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets,*" it must be clear therefore, that to take "*visions*" and "*similitudes*" as literal matters of fact, is contrary to the teaching of Scripture itself. The things written concerning Abraham being "*an allegory,*" Christ could not have descended from a man, or prophet, called Abraham,—for an allegorical history is not a history of things or persons as they were, but "*as though they were;*" and this fair Scriptural view of the matter demonstrates that no literal Jesus Christ ever existed—or was ever literally crucified—or ever literally rose from the dead—or ever, in short,

literally did any one thing related of him,—for either Christ descended from Abraham, or *Scripture is false*; and if the hypothesis of Abraham's existence be an hypothesis in the air, all that is written about Christ must be equally airy and unsubstantial, as we read, (Gal. chap. 3, v. 29) “*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*” Whether you strictly adhere to the literal interpretation of Abraham's history, and insist that it does not speak of things that were not “as though they were,” or whether, driven from that ground by the force of reason, aided by the sharp and powerful weapons of Scripture texts, you are yet willing to save yourselves (for dying men catch at straws) by admitting that the things written about Abraham are only “*similitudes*,” seemingly a history, but really a fable—still must the belief in Christ be abandoned, as the literal interpretation would be in direct opposition to the plainest Scriptural teaching; while acknowledging that Abraham's history is mere romance, at once reduces the Sacred Volume to a book of fables, allegories, metaphors—a mystery to the vulgar, enclosing a hidden and deeper meaning than they attach to them—stamping moreover as imbeciles, or something worse, those holy men who preach the gospel as literally true. The rash theologians who declare that what is written in Genesis about Abraham is *partly literal, partly allegorical*—or, in plain language, *partly true and partly false*, are the men who most effectually undermine the Christian religion; for by making the important admission, that some things could not have taken place as related in the Bible, they shake all confidence in such a divine medley, and set men thinking *how much of it is literal? how much of it is allegory? how much of it is true? how much of it is false?*—so that the sacredness of the volume is destroyed, and that “*given by inspiration of God*” is reduced to a mere book of riddles, which each is at liberty to guess the meaning of, without any other than the dim light of reason, or any other aids than those afforded by a weak and fallible judgment—while a plain literal interpretation of the Holy Book, so simple—so easy—so irrefutable—so magical as it ought to be in its effects, when given by those appointed to “*go teach all nations*,” has this fearful consequence involved in it, that such a teaching flatly contradicts those parts of Scripture which *cannot be mistaken*. Nor will faith here step in and save us; no, not even that faith which Catholic divines tell us “serves as a remedy for our natural defects, and supplies the place of knowledge—teaches us

to believe without doubting doctrines which we cannot comprehend, or the testimony of God who has taught them ;” for faith, however strong or holy, cannot reconcile contradictions *once perceived as contradictions* ; a relation, however absurd, may be, through the efficacy of faith, implicitly believed ; but that which is known to be its opposite cannot also be believed, as for example, when the faithful Christian searches the Scriptures, and finds there related that Jesus is the son of Abraham, he cannot, however armed in faith, believe that Abraham, his father, had no real existence, even though the same Scriptures declare that “ *the things written concerning Abraham were an allegory,*” that is, according to lexicographers, “ a figurative discourse in which something is intended that is not contained in the words literally taken.” How could that faith which “supplies the place of knowledge, and teaches us to believe without doubting doctrines which we cannot comprehend,” reconcile us to the conflicting and impossible statements of the Scripture, which declares that our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified and killed at three different places,—at Calvary, according to Luke, (chap. 23, v. 33) “ *And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.*” At Galatia, according to (Gal. chap. 3, v. 1) “ *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you ?*” At Sodom in Egypt, as written in (Rev. chap. 11, v. 8) “ *And their dead bodies shall be in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*” Here is a strange confusion, if not contradiction of texts, which no faith can clear up or reconcile, though it may enable those who possess it to skip over such vain difficulties, or pass them by as unworthy of notice ; but surely, the mere literal expounder of the Bible is here foiled by his own weapons—for not only is it contrary to reason and all that we call fact, that a *real* person should exist from an *ideal* one, but it is, if any thing can be, contray to common sense, for an individual, man, prophet, or God, *to be killed and crucified three times over at three different places.* The trinity of persons in the Godhead it is difficult to understand ; but a trinity of killings and crucifixions seems beyond the reach even of those “who believe without doubting doctrines which they cannot comprehend, or the testimony of God who has taught them ;” but the allegorical explication will enable not only “men of little faith,”

but even Infidels, who are satisfied with nought but reason, not having one grain of faith in holy legend and religious tales, to get a right understanding of the Scripture. Surely, the Christians who believe literally what is above quoted from the Scripture, with regard to the crucifixion, bring shame upon human reason; (Heb. chap. 6, v. 6) "*Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame!*" The Scripture literally teems with texts, about the meaning of which there can be no two opinions; but the limits we have prescribed for ourselves, forbid that we unnecessarily multiply them; and though some may urge, that Scriptural texts thus plucked out one by one, "serve only for springes and snares," that a German Jew, like the Devil, "may use Scripture for his purpose," with other hard things—no man who has firm faith in the Scripture will do this; nor can those who produce their cause, and bring forth their strong reasons from the Sacred Volume, consistently deny the same right to others, and text for text is unquestionably fair and honorable warfare. Now, we challenge all the theologians of Europe to overthrow us in textual combat, or shew from the Bible, that Abraham was a real personage; the fact is, that "*through infirmity of the flesh, (human reason); the gospel was preached unto us at first (that is, during the infancy of civilization) as really and literally true; but, when the flesh (human reason) shall be cured of its infirmity, and be made sound,*" Scripture will be interpreted more in harmony with truth, than any interpretation could have been in former times,—its riddles may now be guessed without danger, metaphors explained—its similitudes and strange mysteries made intelligible—its literal contradictions and absurdities reconciled and made reasonable—and a rational interpretation given of its mystical sense, and plain nonsense.

The German theologians, by their boldness, immense research, and critical acumen, have fairly carried away the Scriptures from the orthodox Christian theologians; to which course they were pioneered by the great writers of the Deistical school, the Bolingbokes, Tolands, Voltaires, and others—who, by shaking the faith of millions in the *literal* reading of the New Testament—and, like Julian Celsus and Porphyry, before them rejecting as pure fable the shameful and truly disgusting recitals contained in the Holy History, made the path straight for the (perhaps in a certain sense) more elevated conceptions of the present German school; so that Strauss fails in due regard, for the parent which begat him, when he stig-

matizes as "dry" "the revolutionary attempts of Deistical criticism directed against Biblical documents," as it is certain, but for so dry a root, no such leaf would have been put forth in our time, as "The Life of Jesus." And surely when Chubb had the hardihood to declare that the Jewish religion, if a revelation from God, disgraced the moral character of the Divinity, by attributing to him a declared partiality for the Jewish nation, and above all, the sanguinary slaughter of the Canaanites! his efforts were not *dry* or sterile; when Bolingbroke, Toland, Morgan, and others, declared the Bible a mere collection of apocryphal books, filled with fables—denied that Biblical recitals reflected a superior or divine light—denounced the law of Moses as a miserable system of superstition, blindness, and servility—the Jewish priests as impostors—and the prophets as the great workers of desolation and intestine wars in the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel; though they may be called *dry revolutionary attempts of Deism*, they nevertheless have been fruitful in great results; and though it may be true, as Strauss remarks—that Woolston has enlarged with much self-complacency upon the absurdity of the literal sense being applied to the miracles, and a frivolous tone pervades the whole, it would be vain to deny that his works have had an immense, and admirable influence.

The celebrated De Wette, a far greater favourite with Strauss than any of the foregoing, (probably because, like him, he declared against the natural explication, and for the mythical explication of the Old Testament,) insists that it is inconsistent and arbitrary to attribute to poetry or fiction only the outside, or envelope of events related in the Old Testament, and desire to conserve the facts as historic. He takes as example, the alliance of God with Abraham, in which, the authors of the natural interpretation abandon the facts as *not facts under their present form*; but yet, pretend to conserve for their recital a foundation purely historic. According to these natural interpreters, there was no real communication between God and Abraham; but in the mind of that patriarch was excited, perhaps during a vision, or perhaps during his wakeful state, certain thoughts which, conformably to the genius of the ancient world, he referred to God. So, according to these natural explainers, Abraham had a vision, and thought he saw God, and made alliance with him, afterwards relating his dreams as a something that really took place; or he was wide awake, and communing with himself, thought he felt on his face—talked with God—was told that he should circumcise the flesh of his foreskin, that it might be a

covenant between him and the Lord, &c. To these natural interpreters of the mysteries contained in the Scriptures, De Wett proposes this question: "How know you that Abraham had such thoughts?" which to us appears a very rational kind of question, which they will find it difficult to answer satisfactorily; for we are sure, with the Apostle Paul, (Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 2, v. 6) that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things; for, (1st Epistle to the Romans, chap. 1, v. 22) "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." How far from folly—how far from *naturalism* must those interpreters of Scripture be, who, in the face of its plainest declarations to the contrary, will obstinately insist that Abraham was a real personage. Truly these are the theologians and critics who bring the Scriptures into contempt—philosophers who, like Eichhorn, take away from Biblical history its divine character, and attributed the supernatural reflex which is spread over it, not to deception or fraud, but to the natural result of the peculiar manner in which the light of antiquity made itself manifest; who strive to make it appear that the vocation of Moses was not a real vocation—that the account in Exodus chap. 3, v. 2, 3, and 4, "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I"—is, when literally received, most absurd and incongruous; who endeavours to explain, that Moses *imagined* he saw the angel of the Lord appear in a flame—that he *imagined* he heard God call out of the bush "Moses, Moses," which call was, in fact, nothing more than the thought long conceived by the patriot of delivering his people—a thought which, renewing itself in a dream with new strength and vivacity, was mistaken by him for divine inspiration. The smoke and the flame upon Mount Sinai, or as written in Exodus, chap. 24, v. 17, "The sight of the glory of the Lord, which was like the devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel," Eichhorn explains as a fire lighted by Moses upon the mountain *in order to assist the imaginations of the Israelites*; and a violent storm happening to co-operate with it, the luminous appearance of his face was a consequence either of his great heat or his position with regard to the "devouring fire," which Moses himself

not understanding the cause of, for (Exod. chap. 31, v. 29) "when he came down from the mount, Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with *him*," though equally with the people,—there was in the circumstance something divine. The same author has given other explanations equally ingenious and equally unsatisfactory of the histories of Noah and Abraham.

In the 21st chapter of Genesis, v. 2 and 3, it is written that "Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of the son who was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac." Then the text goes on to say that "Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, being eight days old, as God had commanded him;" but before the birth of Isaac, the history states (Gen. chap. 16, v. 2, 3, 4) that "Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing : I pray thee, go in unto my maid ; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived," &c. Here we have a precise account in Genesis of the conception of Hagar, the bondmaid, who is afterwards informed by an angel of the Lord that she is with child, and "shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael;" also, the conception of Sarah, the free woman, and the birth of Isaac ; but, what must be the astonishment of a literal interpreter of Scripture, who believes the story of Abraham to be something more than an allegory, when he turns to the 4th chapter, 22, 23, and 24th verses of Galatians, and sees the following? "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, and the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh ; but he of the freewoman was by promise. *Which things are an allegory.*" What evidence can be more conclusive against the supposition, that the history of Abraham is matter of fact?—yes, the weight of these Scriptural texts will bear down and crush the puny sophism of theologians—for the things related of Abraham are proved to be allegorical by texts and arguments, having all the force and completeness of a moral demonstration. He must be a knave, or an idiot, who will, after this, declare with Saint Matthew, "Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham," in spite of common sense, reason, and Scripture ; and if Jesus Christ was not the son of

Abraham, who was he the son of?—or was Christ a purely imaginary being as well as Abraham?—which we declare, and are pledged to prove. It has now been shewn by Biblical texts, that the character of Abraham is an allegory—that his history is a something related which is not meant—that the author, or authors, attached to it one sense, while we are bewildered by its literal absurdity, and, in many cases, have lost all clue to its hidden meaning—so that, while we “cannot judge from appearance, if we would judge righteous judgment,” we should do well to act upon the advice of Origenes, and, if possible, bury ourselves in the true meaning of the writers.

In taking leave, therefore, of Abraham, and passing to a review of the various arguments that have been urged in favor of the existence as a human being of Jesus Christ, with full confidence in our ability to shew by reference to ecclesiastics of acknowledged authority in the Christian Church, as well as Pagan and Jewish historians, who have written, or were said to have written, corroboratory of the prevailing notion, that a God, or at all events, a man called Christ, was born in Judea eighteen hundred years ago; we will shew by these very *favorable*, and often certainly partial authorities themselves, that the books of the New Testament are books containing absurdity and falsehood of a most pernicious and demoralising character!—that what is there written about the doings of a Jesus—is a forgery, and an insult to the common sense of mankind!

The reader will not now fail to conclude, that the existence of Jesus Christ, so far from being proved by Scripture, is disproved by it. Upon this point, if on no other, the Sacred Writings are perfectly intelligible—for they expressly declare, that Christ was crucified and killed three times over, at three different times and places, which it is phisically and morally impossible any bodily Christ could have been. Nay, it is beyond all human conception, that the Son of God could have died at *three places at one time, or at different times*: killing any thing three times over was never heard of any where but in Scripture: so that, it is evident the expressions are figurative. Our critique will, it is hoped, give the *coup de grace* to this moral absurdity—and by opening the eyes of the people, enable them to see the depths of their superstitious folly—for of all moral poisons the dregs of superstition are the worst.

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LETTER 23.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.*"—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

A glance at the early history of the Church of Christ will materially assist us in the very important investigation we have undertaken; and, though we shall not confine ourselves exclusively to Ecclesiastical historians, it is *principally* from them evidence will be adduced in disproof of the existence of Jesus as a human being. By such a course, malice itself will be disarmed; and, whatever may be thought of our proofs and reasonings, none will dare accuse us of partiality or unfairness. The weapons wrested from opponents in a warfare of this nature, and used against themselves—even if those weapons be not remarkable for keenness of edge, or excellence of temper—always do great execution. Acting upon this principle, sceptical authorities will be but little referred to, while special reference will be made to those who are acknowledged champions of the faith in Jesus—whether as God, inspired prophet, or human being.

Among these Doctor Mosheim claims the first rank, both on account of his shining talents, and undoubted orthodoxy. His great work on Ecclesiastical History, displays immense erudition and research; nor can it be doubted that it has had a prodigious influence in propping up the (now crumbling into dust) Reformed Church. He had, moreover, no relish for Infidels, as his writings

abundantly testify. Papistry and Infidelity were his abominations ; and whatever emanated from these sources was to him distasteful and bitter. At the very outset of his book, he denounces the Sceptics as “a set of miserable and unthinking creatures, who treat with negligence—nay, sometimes with contempt—the religion of Jesus, not considering that they are indebted to it for all the good things which they so ungratefully enjoy.” Bishop Warburton, pronounced his work the only one deserving the name of an Ecclesiastical History ; and Doctor Maclaine, announces it as a history of the Christian Church, composed with judgment, taste, and candour—drawn with uncommon discernment and industry from the best sources, enriched with much useful learning, and several important discourses connected with the history of arts, philosophy, and civil government. One who had so profound a contempt for Sceptics, so much learning, and so much love for the Church, will have immense weight with Christians, whether his teachings tend to support or overthrow the vulgar belief in the existence of a man called Jesus of Nazareth.

The perusal of the first twenty or thirty pages of his work is sufficient to prove how unstable were all human opinions and feelings when Jesus is said to have appeared—how confused, false, and therefore little to be relied on, were all documents dignified by the name of historic, which were written at, or subsequent to, that period. In those days, if the priests were not more learned, the people were far more ignorant and fanatical than in our own times, and nothing was more easy than for the scribes and men in authority to palm upon the credulity of the multitude their own audacious forgeries as authentic and holy documents. Daring and rebellious spirits who protested against such enormities were branded as seditious and impious—their conduct as immoral, arrogant, and blasphemous—and, upon all occasions, they were held up to public execration as Atheistical disturbers of public tranquility.

The power of the priests was then enormous ; and no priesthood has ever been known to part with power except when forced to do so. It was to be expected, therefore, that the histories they wrote, or hired others to write, would contain just as much of truth as suited their purposes, which, we presume, might all have been squeezed into a few pages—and yet, some would have us rely with perfect confidence upon such documents, even when they contradict the evidence of our senses. The treatment received by the first Christians, shews clearly what must have been the fanaticism of the

people, which, it has been justly observed, is the true measure of priestly power. They were denounced by the priests, aided by the respectables in society, as reckless innovators, shameless revolutionists, and brazen-faced Atheists, who, under cover of a new order of things, aimed at the destruction of property, and the disorganization of society. The feeling against the early Christians was not confined to the Jewish people, but was spread far and wide—wherever, in short, the voice of authority could make itself heard.

Tacitus, the Roman historian, renowned for his eloquence and learning—a man, we should suppose, little influenced by the vulgar uproar of knavery and fanaticism, possessing, as he did, so large and comprehensive a mind, nevertheless, “kindled in the common blaze,” and bitterly reproached the followers of “one Jesus, or Christ,” as *haters of mankind!*—styles their religion, a *destructive superstition!* using other very harsh and abusive epithets; while Suetonius, another famous historical writer, was no less severe. As observed in a note to Mosheim—“The odious epithets which Tacitus applies to the Christians and their religion, as likewise the language of Suetonius, who calls Christianity a *poisonous or malignant superstition!* (*maleficia superstitio*), are founded upon the same reasons. A sect, which not only could not endure, but labored to abolish the religious systems of the Romans, and also those of all the other nations of the earth, appeared to the short-sighted and superficial observers of religious matters as enemies of all mankind, and persons possessed with a mortal hatred of all the human race.”

It is certain, that the teachings of the early Christians alarmed the credulous simpletons, who prided themselves on standing firm in the ancient faith, from a conviction of its divine nature and excellence, and the cunning knaves who stood firm in the ancient faith, because they had no other resting place—no other source of power, profit, and emolument. Simpletons are the pasture of knaves, who always use them for their own selfish purposes; so the latter did not fail to excite in the former the most deadly hatred towards the new sect. The religion of the early Christians seems to have been, in all its essential features, the same as Christians now profess; but, the people ever so “short-sighted, and such superficial observers of religious matters,” were then taught to denounce the new doctrine as a blasphemous innovation upon long established and holy opinions, while its teachers were shunned, or persecuted as *dangerous men*, who preached a destructive superstition. Now, all is changed, and the people are instructed by the successors of these

wise and *holy* men, to reverence the *destructive superstition* as the only true and holy religion, and, as good Christians, resist to the uttermost all inroads upon the faith, attempted by the preachers of a *destructive infidelity*; from all which jargon about destructive superstitions and true religions, we gather the interesting truth, so well expressed by Hobbes, that true religion means the religion which *is* fashionable, while a dangerous superstition is the religion which is *not* fashionable. When Nero bore sway in Rome, it was treason against the state to call Christianity *true religion*; but times were changed when Constantine the great assumed the purple, then it was treason to call it a *destructive superstition*. Verily, it is *fashion* decides these things.

The first Christians seem to have been well-meaning sincere enthusiasts; but the wary searcher after truth will be careful to distinguish between the rant of enthusiasm and the sober truths of history. There are few religious enthusiasts who do not wilfully and wantonly deceive others, while they unconsciously deceive themselves. The maximum of religious feeling is, perhaps, always accompanied by the minimum of moral feeling—hence, the expression of a modern political writer, “maximize morals, minimize religion.” The idea of looking into the writings of the first Christians for unmixed truth, however sincere they may have been, is, when well considered, mere lunacy—the idea of a studious bed-lamite—for the most excellent intention is, at best, a most fragile guarantee against errors of judgment, and those hallucinations of intellect to which the religiously sincere are peculiarly subject. Sincere fools are the worst of fools, for their folly has neither weight nor measure, it calls no reason master, and opens for itself an interminable career.

We read in Mosheim, that “the Christians had neither sacrifice, nor temples, nor oracles, nor sacerdotal orders; and this was sufficient to bring upon them the reproaches of an ignorant multitude, who imagined that there could be no religion without these.” “Thus (continues Mosheim), they were looked upon as a sort of Atheists; and, by the Roman laws, those who were chargeable with Atheism, were declared the pests of human society. Their morality, though denounced as Atheistic, seemed to be of a practical character—for, among the virtues which distinguished the rising church *in this its infancy*, that of charity to the poor and needy, shone in the first rank, and with the brightest lustre. The rich supplied the wants of their indigent brethren with such liberality and readiness, that, as

St. Luke tells us, among the primitive disciples of Jesus all things were *in common*."

That the changes which have taken place since that period in the spirit and practice of Christians have been radical, will at once strike the most careless reader, as in these more enlightened times, the bulk of Christians seem to revel and glory in all the darkness of Paganism—they are not now without sacrifices, nor temples, nor images, nor oracles, nor sacerdotal orders; for, in four days they imagine there can be no religion without these. All who now imitate the first Christians, and dispense with sacrifices, temples, oracles, and sacerdotal orders, are "looked upon as a sort of Atheists"—to which it is hardly necessary to add, that by the Christian laws, supported by Christian customs, those chargeable with Atheism are "declared the pests of human society." Nor do we now find that the rich supply the wants of their indigent brethren with such liberality and readiness, as to have all things *in common*.

Some conception of the revilings and bitter persecutions suffered by these men who had faith in Jesus, may be obtained by a perusal of the following passages from Mosheim: "The first three or four ages of the Church were stained with the blood of martyrs, who suffered for the name of Jesus. The greatness of their number is acknowledged by all who have a complete acquaintance with ancient history, and have examined that matter with impartiality. It would have been surprising if, under such a monster as Nero, the Christians had enjoyed the sweets of tranquility and freedom."

The object of Nero, in persecuting the Christians, seems to have been purely political. He lay under the imputation of setting Rome in flames, and he desired to lift the load of odium from his own shoulders to those of the Christians, who were hated more on account of their seditious practices, than their peculiar religious dogmas, and this with some shew of reason and justice—for they were not content to practice their own rights and ceremonies, but they openly attacked the religion of the state and the corruptions of the times—so that the Roman government rather feared the political than the religious tendencies of their doctrine. According to Mosheim, Christ himself was first brought before the Jewish high-priest and Sanhedrim, before whom he was accused of having violated the law, and blasphemed the majesty of God, and from thence dragged to the tribunal of Pilate, the Roman prætor, where he was charged with *seditious enterprises* and *with treason against Cæsar*.

All state religions—all systematized national creeds, formulæ, and ceremonies—whether called Pagan, Jewish, Mohammedan, or Hindoo—are hateful as they are demoralizing, and have, in all ages, been supported by priestly obstructives, as the most effectual drag-chain upon the energies of humanity; but, of all systems of superstition, the Christian seems to have been the most systematic. There has been more persecution for conscience sake since Christianity became part and parcel of national law, than during all the preceding ages recorded in history. The persecutions suffered by the Christians under the Roman emperors, were inflicted on account of their seditious, not their religious, practices; for, as Mosheim justly observes, “One of the principle reasons of the severity with which the Romans persecuted the Christians, seems to have been the abhorrence and contempt with which the latter regarded the religion of the empire, *which was intimately connected with the form, and, indeed, with the very essence of its political constitution.* For, though the Romans gave an *unlimited toleration* to all religions, which had nothing in their tenets dangerous to the commonwealth, yet they would not permit that of their ancestors, which was established by the laws of the state, to be turned into derision, nor the people to be drawn away from their attachment to it;” to which Mosheim adds, “these were the two things which the Christians were charged with, and that justly—*though to their honor.*”

So much is written regarding the state of the times, immediately after Jesus Christ is *said* to have lived, with a view to shew the reader that the great mass of the people were then radically corrupt—as corrupt as they were fanatical—and, that the few who ruled were, if that be possible, more corrupt than the people themselves. When it will appear evident, that nothing pure could emanate from so foul a source, as all experience proves that the history of a people is as a mirror in which that people see themselves. A lying people will have a lying history, it will be more or less distorted according to the moral distortion of the events it relates. Where there is a confusion of ideas, all else will be confused; hence, we invariably find, that in troublesome times, little is accurately known, and absurd fictions, such as that related about Jesus Christ, are generated, and handed down to posterity as sacred truths.

Mosheim gives as a reason *why Christ was born at all*, the corruption of the times, and the general depravity of the human race, and observes, that “the errors and disorders that we have now been

considering, required something far above human wisdom and power to dispel and remove them, and to deliver mankind from the miserable state to which they were reduced by them. *Therefore, towards the conclusion of the reign of Herod the great, the Son of God descended upon earth, and taking upon him the human nature, appeared to men under the sublime characters of an infallible teacher, an all sufficient mediator, and a spiritual and immortal king. The place of his birth was Bethlehem in the land of Palestine. The year in which it happened has not hitherto been fixed with certainty, notwithstanding the deep and laborious researches of the learned on that matter. There is nothing surprising in this, when we consider that the first Christians labored under the same difficulties, and were divided in their opinions concerning the time of Christ's birth. That which appears most probable is, that it happened about a year and six months before the death of Herod, in the year of Rome 748 or 749. The uncertainty of the point is of no sort of consequence. We know that the Sun of Righteousness has shone upon the world; and, though we cannot fix the precise period in which he arose, this will not hinder us from enjoying the direction and influence of his vital and salutary beams."*

All this pretty jargon about Suns of Righteousness shining upon the world, vital and salutary beams, &c., should not distract our attention from the *moonshine* of the above extraordinary passage. The complacency and pious pompousness of the historian is provokingly ludicrous; for, after the learned have been laboriously searching and re-searching for many a century—after John Albert Fabricius has collected all the opinions of the learned concerning the year of Christ's birth, yet proved nothing; then, in the true spirit of the fox who could not catch the grapes, and with quite as much cunning as that animal, our historian declares "the uncertainty however of the point, is of no sort of consequence!" So, after all the care of theological antiquaries, who hoard up treasures in heaven, by collecting the dates that could in any wise throw light upon the time at which the blessed man-god was born, certainty cannot be obtained; and, that which appears most *probable* now is, that it happened about a year and six months before the death of Herod; but, as no one seems to know when Herod existed, and some have doubted whether he ever existed at all, Christ's being born in the year of Rome 748, or 749, is, indeed, very problematical. It will very soon appear most *probable*, that he was not born at all; but, like

Minerva from the head of Jupiter, the fiction sprung from the brains of the early Christian priests.

The translation of "Strauss' Life of Jesus," in weekly numbers, at a price within the reach of all our readers, renders it unnecessary that we should quote largely from his work in support of our position—that the whole story about Jesus, if not purely ideal, is practically so; for, as to pure idealism, in the *strict sense*, perhaps we could find no such thing were we to ransack the histories of Buddha, Viehnon, Adonis, Mithra, or any other wonderful man-gods. When Strauss declares, with regard to the story of the miraculous conception, that "God could not have had a sufficient motive to suspend a natural law established by himself, unless to obtain results unworthy of him ;"* and replies to the objection that the end of the redemption exacted the purity of Jesus by the exclusion from all participation in the work of begetting, of a sinful father, by saying "that if the maternal participation remained (which it evidently does, according to the Evangelists), in order to obtain the purity supposed to be necessary, we admit another divine operation, which purified the Virgin Mary from the moment of her conception—else would Jesus have been stained by the sin of his mother; but if God purified, in that fashion, the mother, it would have been much more simple to have done as much for the father, than by excluding the latter, and by performing himself the paternal task, *overthrow so glaringly the Laws of Nature!*" The same author says, "We should bear in mind the phrase of Plutarch, *No woman has ever pretended to become a mother without knowing a man*, apply it to the *impossible* of Cerinthe; for it is physiologically certain that the concurrence of two human bodies of different sexes is necessary in order that the germ of the new human life may be fructified and developed."

Strauss thus deals with the miraculous conception; and his dealings with the rest of the sacred life of Jesus are precisely similar. He explains so minutely the doings of Jesus—he refines so admirably—that not even the ghost of the man or god called Jesus remains; he explains and refines him into nothingness—makes him no longer real but ideal—in short, his ideas of the existence of Christ may be summed up in the expressive monosyllable—FUDGE!

* Vide "Life of Jesus," first Section.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 24.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

Strauss' "*Vie de Jesus*," has done much damage to genuine orthodoxy. That singular work has unsettled the faith of thousands here and on the continent of Europe. The rage of Christian teachers knows no bounds; and ever since the appearance of the work in 1835, paper pellets from clerical pop-guns have been flying in all quarters; but the ammunition is, itself, too soft to do serious mischief, with whatever force or dexterity it may be propelled.

The first section of the above work, which treats of the miraculous conception, the genealogy of Jesus, &c., is invaluable as a criticism, containing matter which, if not unanswerable, has never yet been answered. The cool irony and the solemn sarcasm which pervades the whole, adds to it pungency and force; and of this we are morally certain, that any man who has the patience and courage to read carefully what is there written, will never again be disturbed by dreams about miraculous conceptions, or virgin-mothers! All ideas of that character will certainly give up the ghost when the section referred to is fairly examined. Many distinguished clergymen of the Established Church are tainted, more or less, by this new and most alarming heresy; among the rest may be mentioned the celebrated Dr. Milner—author of the *History of Christianity* from the breaking up of the Roman Empire—Prebendary of Westminster,

a writer held in great repute for his learning and *leaning towards* heterodoxy. Nay, the breach between him and the bigots is of so serious and alarming a nature that he has even been loudly censured by the latter for eating the bread of the church, while he is leagued with German Infidels in the work of undermining its foundation.

Opposition makes some men cruel, and the determined eaters of the church's bread, who will live by the altar human folly has erected, and gasp there their last gasp, are driven by their misfortunes to desperation, and in their frenzy seem to lose at once all sense of decency and all self-control. They hate Germany—"it is the land of thought." Germans being thinkers, have earned their abhorrence; but this work of Strauss is a dose of infidelity for which they were by no means prepared—a moral bolus they will never swallow, unless forced to do so by the dread of losing their influence. Strauss, himself, scared by the din raised about his ears, has endeavored to give a new coloring and form to the harsher points of his doctrines, leaving one more to be added to the list of men who, like Galileo and Lawrence, uttered great truths but dared not abide by them in the teeth of authority. But that Strauss, like Erasmus, had no disposition to become a martyr, may be plainly seen in his Preface to the first edition of his work, where the following ridiculous passage may be found: "The author knows that the internal essence of the Christian belief is completely independent of critical researches. The supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection, and his ascension to the sky, remain eternal truths, however we may doubt the reality of these things considered as historical facts." Any man who should first read the work itself, and then turn to the above passage in the Preface, would have his feelings oscillating between disgust and pity—disgust at this bare-faced moral delinquency of a man who should prove the character of Christ a myth, or mythos, which he has himself declared to be a character made up of the sum total of the *beliefs*, the *ideas*, and the *sentiments* which prevail among any people with regard to some individual who was *imagined* or *supposed* to have really existed. Pity that such splendid talents should be so far bowed down by fear of persecution, or the hope of reward, as to lend himself directly or indirectly to the perpetuation of falsehood. We who have nothing to hope for, save a knowledge of the truth, and nothing to fear, if not shame, are in a condition to say the whole truth, and declare that the legitimate conclusion from Strauss' work, is, that the story of

the miraculous conception is mythic—that which is related in apocryphal books about his youth is mythic—that, in short, the whole tale from its commencement to its termination, from the conception to the resurrection, is mythic, not a history of real events, but a history of the *ideas, sentiments, and beliefs* of the Jewish people; and Strauss' opinion really was that, perhaps, a man called Jesus played a distinguished part in Jerusalem some eighteen hundred years ago, and that after the death of the individual a new character was *manufactured* for him, so that it should square and harmonize with the type of the Messiah prefigured in the traditions and sacred books of the Jews. How rankly dishonest, therefore, it is, for such a writer to declare that the idle tales told about the supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection and his ascension to the sky, remain eternal truths! The gospel histories are neither eternal, nor true, as Strauss himself has clearly proved.

The four gospels were, without doubt, the inventions of the early doctors of the Christian sect who, Mosheim informs us, “had been educated in the schools of the rhetoricians and sophists, and rashly employed the arts and evasions of their subtle masters in the service of Christianity, and intent only upon defeating the enemy, they were too little attentive to the means of victory, indifferent whether they acquired it by artifice or plain dealing.” Again, in the same passage, “Thus it happened through the pernicious influence of human passions, which too often mingle themselves with the execution of the best purposes and the most upright intentions, that they who were desirous of surpassing all others in piety *looked upon it as lawful, and even laudable, to advance the cause of piety by artifice and fraud.*” Here we have a singularly important admission from an orthodox Christian historian, which proves the utter worthlessness of the writings of the early Christian writers in support of the belief in Christ—for how can any reasonable being repose in safety, or build up a belief with the materials furnished by men who “*looked upon it as lawful, and even laudable, to advance the cause of piety by artifice and fraud.*” What guarantee can we have that the four gospels were not fraudulently concocted and imposed upon the world by such pious craftsmen as genuine? Whatever affects the character of those who determined which should be the divine gospels must affect our belief in the gospels themselves, unless those gospels carry with them internal evidence of their genuineness, which is so far from the fact, that the task of recon-

cing their discrepancies and contradictions has been long since given up as an interminable as well as a bad job.

“The opinions, or rather the conjectures (says Dr. Mosheim) of the learned concerning the times when the books of the New Testament were collected into one volume, as also about the authors of those collections, are extremely different. This important question is attended with great and almost insuperable difficulties to us in these latter times. It is, however, sufficient for us to know that before the middle of the second century, the greatest part of the books of the New Testament were read in every Christian society throughout the world, and received as a divine rule of faith and manner.” None can fail to admire the coolness and gravity with which the worthy Doctor disposes of a difficulty. He treats difficulties and unexplained things quite cavalierly, and like the bold huntsman with his five barred gates, he seems to glory in leaping over them. The more the merrier—the more leaping the better sport in the theological hunt. Nothing can be more candid than his manner, more imperturbable than his gravity, or more conclusive than his reasonings, for the which three essentials in the character of an historian we honor him; for his candid statements have a weight and force no others could have; his gravity gives them character and respectability, while his reasonings tend to the overthrow of Christianity, for they shew that *when* the gospels were written is not known—that all relating to them is doubtful and uncertain; and this, remember reader, is not an Infidel but a Christian historian, not one who wished to ruin Christianity by undermining, or openly assaulting it, but a learned man who anxiously desired to strengthen and consolidate it. When he says the question is attended with great and almost insuperable difficulties, we agree with him; but when he adds, “It is, however, sufficient for us to know that before the middle of the second century the greatest part of the books of the New Testament were read in every Christian society,” &c., we do not agree with him, for we can never be said to have sufficient knowledge of a subject till we are informed of all that vitally affects it. It is *sufficient* for our present purpose to shew Christian readers that the worthy Doctor, with all his learning, can give no account when the books of the New Testament were collected together—to which we may add, by whom they were collected together? So that this crack historian is constrained to acknowledge, after all his searchings, that he neither knows when

Jesus was born, how he passed his time, or what species of education he received during the first twelve years of his life—nor does he know when the books of the New Testament were patched up in their present form, and carefully separated from all merely human compositions, which abounded during the first and second century. However, he subsequently *assures* us, on the authority of Eusebius, that the four gospels were collected during the life of St. John, and that the three first received the approbation of that divine Apostle, which Eusebius, by the way, has been loudly accused of using deceit in the composition of his Ecclesiastical History.

After being well assured by such rascally authority that the four gospels were collected during the life of St. John, and that the three first received the approbation of that divine Apostle, then Mosheim proceeds to ask “Why may we not suppose that the other books of the New Testament were gathered together at the same time?” To which supposition there can be no valid objection, though the reason given in support of its probability is rather a singular one, which is no other than the urgent necessity of its being done. “For (observes Mosheim) *not long after Christ’s ascension into heaven, several histories of his life and doctrines, full of pious frauds and fabulous wonders, were composed by persons whose intentions, perhaps, were not bad, but whose writings discovered the greatest superstition and ignorance.* Nor was this all; *productions appeared which were imposed upon the world by fraudulent men as writings of the holy Apostles.*” Now, we ask any candid believer in Jesus, as a man more or less inspired with the love of truth, whether he thinks it probable that immediately after the death of such an astonishing Reformer, such a multitude of forged productions could have been imposed upon the world by fraudulent men? That there were about that period innumerable apocryphal books and spurious histories, containing full, true, and particular accounts of a man called Jesus, is certain; and it is equally certain, that they must have been the fruitful cause of schism and confusion. The whole history of Jesus is a book of blunders and wonders, and it would be really more wonderful, if possible, were it any thing else; and those who wrote the four gospels, settled by pious rogues and fanatical idiots as the true gospels, wrote under the influence of inspiration, it may be safely averred that none but inspired persons can make sense of them. The four gospels contain some of the most absurd and senseless trash that ever was committed to paper; and if the apocryphal books are to be discarded by men of reflection on account of the

nonsense they contain, surely the four gospels must speedily share the same fate.

Mosheim says the rulers of the church used all possible care and diligence in separating the books that were truly apostolical and divine from all that spurious trash; but how did Mosheim *know* that the early rulers of the church did this? what guarantee have we of their infallibility in book choosing? Rulers of the church are not over diligent in separating the true and good from the spurious and trashy; their diligence in these reformed times goes quite in an opposite direction, for they take much pains to conserve trash and discard truth. They are the conservators of the prejudices as well as the morals of the people; and we have shewn from Mosheim himself, that the early Christians were indifferent whether they acquired victory by artifice or plain dealing—by fraud or by violence!

It cannot be matter of wonder that Christian ministers should desire to disclaim all connection with apocryphal books, and get rid of them by hook or by crook—though, doubtless, if they had been wary politicians, and perfectly united among themselves, gone the whole hog—bristles included, and boldly proclaimed all that had ever been written about the Lord Jesus was genuine and divine, the apocryphal books would, at this moment, have been as firmly believed in by the faithful as are now the four gospels. Besides, the history of Jesus now wants completeness, as none of the gospels, as they stand at present, relate the actions, or occurrences of the Redeemer's youth until he was twelve years old, when, we are told, he tarried behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and his mother knew not of it; and after three days, they found him sitting in the midst of the doctors both hearing them and asking them questions; this is the first time we hear of the Saviour's doings in the true gospels: but those books now rejected as apocryphal give, at all events, a more complete history, and satisfy the laudable curiosity all good Christians must feel to know how the boy Jesus used to amuse myself? what kind of instruction he received? what trade he followed? &c., of which these cast-aside writings furnish us with. One or two of these historical anecdotes, we shall furnish as a specimen of the kind of mental diet greedily swallowed by the early Christians. It is copied *verbatim* from Sike's Latin translation of the *Evangelium Infantæ*, published in Arabic and Latin by Henry Sike in 1627, 8vo., and re-printed in Fabricius *Condex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*. We may add, the work is generally attributed to Saint Thomas:—

“And when the Lord Jesus had completed seven years from his

nativity, he was one day playing with some other boys of the same age, his companions; the players employed themselves in making figures of oxen, asses, birds, and others of the same kind, of mud, and each boasted of his work, and endeavoured to prove its superiority over the other figures. Then the Lord Jesus said to the boys, I will command these figures that I have made to walk. The boys then inquired if he was the Creator's son? And the Lord Jesus commanded them to walk, and they immediately walked; and when he ordered them to return, they returned. He made the figures of birds and sparrows; and when he commanded them to fly, they flew; and when he commanded them to remain stationary, they remained stationary; and if food or drink was offered, they ate and drank. When the boys afterwards went to their parents and related this to them, their fathers said to them, avoid associating with him in future, children, because he is a magician; fly and shun him, and never play with him from this moment."

"Joseph took the Lord Jesus with him when he went round the city; and when he was called by men to exercise his trade, by making doors, or milk-pails, or sieves, or chests, the Lord Jesus was with him wherever he went; and as often as Joseph had any thing to make longer or shorter, broader or narrower, the Lord Jesus extended his hand towards it, and immediately it became as Joseph wished; so that every thing he did was done in a most excellent manner."

"One day the Lord Jesus went out into the street to play, and saw boys who had assembled for playing, and mixed with the crowd. And when they saw him they concealed themselves, and caused him to look for them. And Jesus arrived at the door of a house and inquired of women who stood there, where the children were gone? And when none there replied, the Lord Jesus again said, what see ye in the furnace? what are they? And they answered, kids three years old. And the Lord Jesus cried out and said, come hither O kids! to your shepherd. And immediately the children came out in the form of kids, and leaped around; and when the women saw this they were greatly astonished and seized with fear and trembling; they, therefore, directly adored the Lord Jesus, and prayed to him, saying, O our Lord Jesus, son of Mary, thou art truly the good shepherd of Israel, have mércy on thy handmaids who stand before thee; for thou, O our Lord! camest to heal, not to destroy!"

No Christians *now* consider these tales worthy of credit; while, in the orthodox gospels, we are left without the shadow of informa-

tion as to the period of the life of Jesus stretching from his birth till, at the age of twelve years, we read of him conversing in a most extraordinary manner with the Jewish doctors in the temple at Jerusalem, where "All that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers;" but we are totally left in the dark by Luke as to the manner in which he became possessed of such an amount of knowledge as to confound and astonish the learned Jews: and the same apocryphal work from which we quoted above, declares that one of the Jewish philosophers, who greatly excelled in medicine and the natural sciences, inquired if the Lord Jesus had studied medicine? When he, in reply, explained physics and metaphysics, hyperphysics and hypophysics, the powers and humours of the body, and their effects—the number of the members and bones, veins, arteries, and nerves—temperaments, hot and dry, cold and humid, and what arose from them—the operations of the soul in the body, and its sensations and powers, &c. &c., which is, indeed astonishing, and redounds so much to the honor of the infant Jesus, that it is a pity it cannot be believed! What a delicious *gobe-mouche* for the faithful followers of the Lamb—if they could but get it down! Besides, it would be satisfactory to complete the history of the Saviour—beginning with the miraculous conception; then to follow, in due order, the equally miraculous bringing-forth; then an account of the miracles that the infant wrought; how he played at pic-a-back, and amused himself by frightening the lads of the village, by mud-larking; then would come a flaming account of his wonderful dexterity in making deal-boards out of sawdust, which boards had all the hardness of beech, with more than the pliability of India-rubber; then would follow the conversations in the Jewish temples, and other places, about physic, metaphysics, hyperphysics, hypophysics, &c. &c. &c., up to the glorious resurrection!—a chain of historic truth, having a beginning, a middle, and an end—its beginning a miracle, its middle a miracle, and its end a miracle—in short, a miracle altogether! which it would be quite miraculous for any one to understand.

The mental advancement of a people for whose edification such crude absurdities were written, must have been small indeed; and yet, that was the period when the gospels, upon which our faith in the existence of Jesus hangs, were written. Who with any pretension to reason would rely upon *such history*?

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 25.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

Our work is fast drawing to a close; and it is now necessary to retrace our steps, and, as it were, measure and examine the ground already passed over. In early numbers it has been shewn that in ancient times the worship of Nature was universal, and that the Sun appearing to the eyes of mortals, the most splendid and useful of its parts or agents was the object of special love and adoration. Streams of heat and light seemed to pour from that brilliant luminary as from an eternal and inexhaustible reservoir; and, as without heat (called *the principle of life*) and light (called *the first being*), our globe, with its endless varieties of vital existences,—from the monad (a secret to the naked eye) which forms the base of vegetable matter, flying the light of the Sun and taking refuge in the shade—to the enormous whale, roaming the mighty deep,—from the butterfly, with wings of gold and azure, basking in the solar rays—to the majestic Condor which wings high its daring flight, proudly towering above the snow-capped mountain's summit, leaving far behind the mightiest hills that convulsed earth seems to have vomited from her bosom,—from the yellow gently-waving ears of corn, moving so gracefully and sportively in harmony with the passing breeze—to the gnarled oak, carrying upon its massive trunk the marks of many ages, standing in calm dignity, as though, like Ajax, it defied the

lightning, and the ever rustling forest of bamboos, which, like a mighty ocean of verdure, charms the eye of the traveller on the shores of the Ganges,—from the molecules of matter which seem to *hesitate*, while standing upon the limits of organization, between the plant and animal, and the polypi whose organs are hardly prepared to fulfil the actions of animality—up to man himself, who seems to be the last, the most elaborate, as he is confessedly the most noble, of Nature's productions,—all, without heat and light, would inevitably perish; the earth itself become a stiffened heap, “without form and void,” and universal silence preside over universal gloom!

That men should, in ages of error, have worshipped the brilliant Star whose appearance waked the earth into life, joy, and gladness, and whose absence seemed to abandon the world to death, darkness, and misery, cannot be matter of wonder; for they always associating the idea of life and intelligence with motion or apparent motion—the Sun appearing to be in motion, was thought to be itself a god, or a god's dwelling place. The next step was to *personify* the brilliancy, force, and goodness of that luminary; but, as upon the earth's surface there exists no type so noble as man himself, the Sun was symbolized by a man—powerful, generous, and brave, whose resistless strength and glorious ardour enable him to overpower and to destroy the powers of darkness, and extirpate those monsters so cruel and destructive to mankind. Hence, Hercules worshipped in Egypt, Phenecia, and Greece; hence, Chrishna, Atys, Adonis, Bacchus, and that crowd of gods and demi-gods, said by the nations of antiquity to have existed; for, though those who first personified Nature as a whole, or in its parts, knew that such personifications were but *symbols of things*: in process of time, the personification was mistaken for a real existence, and a vulgar belief grew up, and strengthened by age, that Hercules, Mithra, Jupiter, and others, had actually existed and performed the acts attributed to them. Here is the cause of the confusion and gross absurdity to be found in all the religious systems which have been, or are now taught.

This work has shewn that Hercules, Mithra, and other gods, were but personifications of the Sun,—while, at the same time, it has incontestably proved that the religion and worship of Christ is but a copy of the religion and worship of Mithra, the god Sun of the Persians. Certainly, as noticed in the second number, Augustin, Firmicus, Justin, Tertullian, and others, having perceived the exact resemblance between the religion of Christ and the religion of

Mithra, did, with an impertinence only to be equalled by its outrageous absurdity, insist that the devil, jealous and malignant, induced the Persians to establish a religion the exact image of Christianity *that was to be*,—for these worthy saints and sinners of the church *could not deny* that the worship of Mithra *preceded* that of Christ,—so that, to get out of the ditch, they summoned the devil to their aid, and with most astonishing assurance, thus accounted for the striking similarity between the Persian and the Christian religion, the worship of Mithra and the worship of Christ; a mode of getting rid of a difficulty at once so stupid and absurd, that it would be almost equally stupid and absurd seriously to refute it. The worship of Christ, and the religion based upon it, is an exact copy, in all its essential features, of the worship of Mithra and the religion of the Magi; if so, is it not morally certain that the Persians did not copy the religion of the Christians, but that the Christians copied the religion of the Persians? The early fathers must have been very reluctant to admit the likeness was so complete; the admission was, however, wrung from them, by facts they were compelled to receive as such, and which could not be explained or argued away by any other than a *devilish* kind of sophistry. It is, therefore, incontestably proved that Mithra was the original personification of the god Sun—of which Christ is the copy—as it is certain the original must exist before the copy can be made; and Mosheim informs us that “Manes (or Manichæus, as he is sometimes called by his disciples), by birth a Persian, educated among the Magi, and instructed in all those arts and sciences which the Persians and the other neighbouring nations held in the highest esteem, who had penetrated into the depths of astronomy, in the midst of rural life studied the art of healing, and applied himself to painting and philosophy,—that this great genius (continues Mosheim) combined these two systems (that is, the Persian and the Christian system), and applied and accommodated to Jesus Christ the characters and actions which the Persians attributed to the god Mithra.” The comparison instituted by us in our second number, between Mithra and Christ, renders it unnecessary to write another line in order to shew that those who worship Christ as a god, are idolators—bowers down to an idol formerly worshipped in Persia under the name of Mithra, and that Manes was right when he accommodated to Christ the character and actions which the Persians attributed to the God Mithra.

Having thus firmly fixed upon the unshakeable basis of authentic history, the opinion with which we set out, that what is related

about Christ is an idle tale, a fiction stolen from ancient nations—let those who are still unmoved in their conviction that the man Christ existed, remember the admission made by Mosheim, that it is not *known when the man Jesus was born*, and that *when* so astonishing an event took place was not known among the first Christians—nay, not only did they not know when Jesus was born, *but they each held different opinions thereupon*; let them remember that in those times there existed enormous abuses and corruptions, that human viciousness seemed to be at its maximum—that, as a consequence, fictions the most gross and absurd were greedily swallowed by the people, and as readily furnished by their ghostly teachers—that with respect to written documents, forgeries were the rule, while genuine authentic documents were the exception—that such was the number of apocryphal books, and piously fraudulent writings—such the unscrupulous and barefaced manner in which sincere cheats endeavoured to palm off their volumes of lies upon credulous magistrates, that, according to Mosheim, it required “all possible care and diligence in the Christian doctors in separating the books that were truly apostolical and divine from such spurious trash;” let them remember that the passage in Josephus, relating to Christ, is now given up as a forged interpolation, totally unworthy of credit, set down to the account of Josephus by some friend to Christianity, who was anxious to strengthen the evidence in favor of Christ’s existence; let them remember that all the Pagan writers who have condescended to notice the Christians, have treated them with superciliousness, and the most marked contempt—stigmatizing them as a despicable sect, practising every imaginable crime, and professing a most *malignant and diabolical superstition*, whilst the observations of Tacitus, so often triumphantly referred to by Christian writers, as authority not to be resisted in favor of the actual existence of a man called Jesus, are, in reality, shaken to their very centre by that historian; indeed, so far from the Christian cause being strengthened by Tacitus, it must, in the opinion of every enlightened and candid man, utterly shake all confidence in it. Tacitus gives the etymology of the term Christian, and says it was derived from one Christ, put to death under Pontius Pilate; but then the question is not whether Christians were, or were not, called after one Christ; but whether the tale told of one Christ is the authentic history of a man who actually existed, or merely one of those legendary traditions which abound in times of superstition and general ignorance? The Roman historian might equally have said, that the Greeks

were the sectaries or followers of one Hercules, who was destroyed by fire after being enveloped in the poisonous robe of the *Centaur*; but no one in his senses will declare that, *therefore*, *Hercules really existed*. Tacitus had to write a history of Nero, from whose cruel tyranny the Christians suffered every kind of hardship and injustice, when he gave to their name the *received etymology*, without deigning to trouble himself further about the leader of so unimportant, and, as they to him appeared, so despicable a sect—besides, as remarked in the fifth Letter, an examination whether a man, or god, called Christ really existed, would have been quite out of place in his work, while that which entirely neutralizes the observation of Tacitus, so greedily seized upon by Christians, is this, that Suetonius, and other Roman historians, also speaks of the Jews, and the manner in which they were excited at Rome, under Claudius, by *a certain Christ*,—thereby contradicting, and throwing discredit upon, the observations of Tacitus, who speaks of one Christ, *put to death by Pilate during the reign of Tiberius*; and yet, these are the statements—these are the proofs of the existence of a man called Jesus Christ, upon which Christians, and even first-rate Infidels confidently rely! It is certain these historians wrote about Christ and Christians, with no other guide than vague rumours, so plentiful in troublesome times; so that what they wrote cannot be esteemed of any importance—hardly worth a passing remark,—nay, their evidence, even though it agreed upon all points, could not be admitted as decisive upon this question; but seeing that they relate two statements entirely contradictory, not only would it be unsafe to consider the mention they make of one Christ, or a certain Christ, as a sufficient historic guarantee for the reality of his existence, they, in fact, help to give consistency and strength to the mass of evidence collected in this work, in disproof of the existence as a human being of the Jesus Christ alluded to by the apostles, who is even now revered, honored, and worshipped by Christians of all denominations—revered as a philosophic reformer by Deists and Atheists—honored as a prophet, more or less divinely inspired, by the Unitarians—and worshipped by millions as an incarnation of Deity, the Son of the living God, who was miraculously conceived, miraculously born, miraculously died, and miraculously ascended into heaven; which story has been most miraculously believed in for more than eighteen hundred years!

The evidence here adduced must for ever decide the question in the minds of all who will take the trouble to examine it; and cer-

tain it is, that the belief in Jesus will speedily give way before the light of truth. The undecided whisperings we now hear, are as the rumblings which precede the earthquake; and it is certain that with a free press, the gross absurdities of the Christian religion will not maintain their ground fifty years longer. All men of intellect hold them to be beneath contempt—the very quintessence of the ridiculous—a scandal and a shame to the reason of man; the scourge of virtue, and the prop—the very corner-stone—of vice! Yes, orthodox theologians and their systems are moved and shaken “as a reed is shaken by the wind,” by the breath of free inquiry.

There are few among you fully acquainted with the dishonest practices commonly resorted to by the early Christian writers. They were notorious forgers—rarely scrupling to spin evidence out of their own brains when none could be found in authentic documents suitable for their purpose. To ward off the blows aimed at them by the Pagans and Infidels, no weapons were considered unlawful: nor was this all, for the old saints seemed to glory in their infamous prowess—wearing their vileness—as a dancing-girl her plumes and jewels—for shew and ornament,—as though rascality, in aid of what they had themselves determined, was the true religion—was the measure of holiness! It was not uncommon for these pious fathers and teachers of Christ’s word, to forge certain documents or paragraphs, and then charge the Jews, or others, with having erased them from the Bible. Thus, Justin Martyr, a most zealous Christian writer, of great reputation for sanctity, charges the Jews with having *erased* from the book of Ezra the following words—“And Ezra said unto the people, This passover is our Saviour and our refuge; and if you will but persuade to be convinced in your hearts that we are to humble to him in a sign or figure, and afterwards to put our trust in him, this place shall not be made desolate to all ages, says the Lord of Hosts; but if you do not believe in him, nor attend to his preaching, you shall be as dirt to the nations:” which passage Justin did most scandalously charge the Jews, because of their enmity to Christ, with blotting-out of the book, evidently with the two-fold object of aspersing the Jews, and by a lie, strengthening the belief in Christ; for, as the editor of Justin justly remarks, “This passage is not to be found in any copies of the apocryphal or canonical Ezra, nor in any other Christian writer, except Lactantius,—and instead of being expunged by the Jews, *appears to have been forged by the Christians.*” Who,

with any pretension to reasonableness, would build his faith upon the testimony of such men ?

A more graceless band of sanctified sinners than the saints and apostolic fathers of the Christian church certainly never before nor since profaned literature. They were truly fishers of men—not forgetting to draw up all other good things ; indeed, all was fish that came to their net. There was no fable, however extravagant, they would hesitate to trumpet forth as a divine truth !—no assertion they did not feel themselves warranted in making for the glory of the church of Christ, and the support of popular delusion ! This may be considered as an overcharged picture of their viciousness,—but what shall we think of St. Irenæus, who tells us that “ Lot’s wife remains in the country of Sodom, not in corruptible flesh, but in a state of permanent salt, and *showing by her natural parts, all the ordinary effects !*” or, of Tertullian, a famed father of the church, in his poem on the same *delicate* subject, which is curious, and should be translated, but our readers would think it richly indecent, so we leave the lines as untranslatable :—

Di citur et vivens alio sub corpore sexus,
Mirifice solito dis pungere sanguine menses.

Mosheim, a great *friend* to the saints, nevertheless deals them some heavy blows in his Ecclesiastical History (p. 124), where he observes, “ that multitudes of people of all kinds were everywhere admitted without examination, and without choice, into the body of the clergy ; the greatest part of whom had no other view than the enjoyment of a lazy and inglorious repose. Many of these ecclesiastics were confined to no fixed places or assemblies—had no employment of any kind, but sauntered wherever they pleased, gaining their maintenance by imposing upon the ignorant multitude, and sometimes by mean and dishonest practices. But if any one should ask how this is reconcileable with the number of saints who, according to the testimonies of both eastern and western writers, are said to have shone forth in this century ? the answer is obvious—*these saints were canonized by the ignorance of the times.*” If the friends of Christianity write thus about its prime supporters, the saints, what can be expected from its enemies ? But the infamy of the saints and fathers is so well established, that it would have been dangerous to the reputation and authority of any historian to throw a cloak over their enormities ; and justice compels us to add, that there is much less of bitterness and more of candour in Mosheim, than in the generality of Christian writers ; this it is which raises

his evidence against Christianity beyond the reach of cavil from the friends of that religion ; and as to its enemies, it must be confessed, they have but slight cause of complaint ; for he has unconsciously furnished one of the most efficient moral battering-rams that can be desired by sceptical destructives, who desire to beat down the walls of the Christian citadels ; and certainly nothing that has been written by Hume, Gibbon, or Voltaire, ever did such damage to the character of Christian writers. Mark his candour when speaking of the Christians,—“ This disingenuous and vicious method of surprising their adversaries by artifice, and striking them down, as it were, by lies and fictions, produced, among other disagreeable effects, a great number of books which were falsely attributed to certain men in order to give their spurious productions more credit and weight.”

Who, after this, will presume to talk about the undoubted authority, or respectable character, of the saints, fathers, and doctors of the Christian church ?—and yet the gospels of Christ—the Evangelical books—were selected by these worthies, *with great carefulness*, from an immense heap of spurious and apocryphal trash, which true and holy gospels they have, with equal *carefulness*, handed down to their descendants in the church. But who will guarantee us from deception—who can now prove that these *CAREful rogues* only selected the true and authentic—leaving the false and the forged ? If it be answered that they were favored in their selection by divine assistance, and therefore could not have made mistakes, such an answer assumes the whole question in dispute ; for if it be allowed that men, such as Mosheim describes the saints and fathers to have been, were divinely inspired, and, as a consequence, infallible—nothing more could be reasonably advanced upon the matter ; but, it is quite impossible that there can be divinely inspired rogues and hypocrites—there cannot be infallible liars—such men cannot be infallible, divine, or trustworthy, whatever name we please to call them ; and they who, according to Mosheim, “ were desirous of surpassing all others in piety, and *looked upon it as lawful, and even laudable to advance the cause of piety by artifice and fraud*, cannot in the eye of the moralist, no matter what their pretensions to divine inspiration and infallibility, be considered in any other light than as deceivers upon principle,—and by system, either knaves or fools—characters equally mischievous, and equally unworthy of our confidence.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 26.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The famous forgery in Josephus, once thought genuine, but now given up by the learned (as a passage interpolated by *some friend to Christianity*) runs thus, "Now, there was about this time Jesus a wise man—if it be lawful to call him a man—for he was the doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those who loved him at the first did not forsake him—for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophet had foretold these, and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day." Strange to say, the above forged paragraph, together with the observation of Tacitus, that "the name Christian was derived from *one Christ*, put to death under Pontius Pilate, &c., and the extract from Suetonius, who, when writing about the disturbances among the Jews, under Claudius, says, "they (the Jews) were moved by a *certain Christ*—a turbulent seditious man, whose abettors were banished from Rome," constitute all the *external evidence* in support of the reality of the man Jesus, so confidently believed in by Christians, Deists, and very many Philosophers! By

external evidence is meant that evidence furnished by writers who were either opposed, or indifferent to Christianity; as we call *internal evidence* all facts, or assumed facts, collected either by Christians themselves, or those who from political motives, regarded Christianity with a favorable eye. The first kind of evidence is of by far the most weight, as it is freed from all suspicion of partiality, which ever attaches more or less to the writing of partizans or sectaries, when engaged in defending their favorite creed, system, or party—nay, if there be any partiality at all in *external evidence*, it is a partiality decidedly hostile to the system or creed to which it refers; hence, an admission made in favor of any set of opinions by a writer known to be opposed to them, is justly considered of far more authority and consequence than the most extravagant laudations of friendly or interested minds; for these latter do not always set down what is, but that they wish to be—and too often, as in the case of the early Christians, not finding the evidence they seek, scruple not to invent it; and those writers have a very slender knowledge of human nature who expect all truth without any alloy of falsehood from the defenders of religious and political systems, whose hopes and feelings are strongly enlisted; for, as justly remarked by Heraclitus, “The light of the human understanding is not a pure dry light, but drenched in the will and the affections.”

It is certain many Pagan writers noticed the sect of Christians, but in a manner far from satisfying, flattering, or honorable—dealing with them as immoral disturbers of political order—mischievous fanatics, whose doctrines, strangely compounded of mysticism, atheism, and superstition, were so pernicious and absurd, that their best refutation was loathing and contempt. Of this any one may assure himself by reading Juvenalis (A. D. 100)—Plinius and Trajanus (A. D. 106)—Antonius (A. D. 170)—Lucianus (A. D. 176)—Celsus (A. D. 176)—Epictetus (A. D. 109)—Aristides (A. D. 176)—Tacitus (A. D. 105)—and Suetonius (A. D. 115). However mortifying the reflection may be, it is unquestionably true, that these writers have treated *the* Christ and his followers with a most provoking indifference, rarely deigning even to hold them up to derision and scorn, as in no case have they done more than give a brief and passing notice of the Christians, invariably considering them as deluded fanatics, misguided followers of some obscure impostor. The writings of Hierocles, Celsus, and Pophyry, may be considered as exceptions to the above remark; but as these were *carefully destroyed* by the Christians, we are left without a clue as to the merits

of any, except the writings of Celsus, some of whose arguments and reasonings have reached our times ; but then they cannot be relied on, as they are just what his opponent Origenes (in whose writings they are preserved) has thought proper to make them—a writer of whom it has been justly observed by Bishop Horsley, “was not incapable of asserting in argument that which he believed not.”

Many writers of well earned and great reputation, who flourished about the time Jesus is said to have played *the* Christ, do not even so much as mention him. Not a syllable about him, or his followers can be found in Pomponius Mela (A. D. 40)—Plinius, the naturalist (A. D. 70)—Aulus Persius (A. D. 60)—Annæus Lucanus (A. D. 63)—Seneca, the philosopher (A. D. 60)—Papinius Statius (A. D. 90)—Petronius Arbiter (A. D. 60)—Quintilianis (A. D. 100)—Lucius Florus (A. D. 110)—Ælianus (A. D. 120)—Dio Prusæus (A. D. 98)—Arrianus (A. D. 140)—Appianus (A. D. 133)—Ptolomæus (A. D. 130)—Pomponius Mena (A. D. 40)—Pansanius (A. D. 170)—and a host of others. Strange that so wonderful a person as Jesus is represented to have been,—such an astonishing reformer and dabbler in magic—whose boldness had made authority tremble—and whose skill in the art of legerdemain filled the earth with the fame of his seditions and miracles, should have been passed by in utter contempt, or *forgotten* by so many philosophers and sages. As to Luciana (who unceremoniously calls *the* Christ a crucified sophist), and Ulpianus, Eunapius, Porphyry, Tacitus, and Suetonius, all good Christians must feel how very equivocal was the mention they made of them—how utterly valueless when considered as evidence, that the man Jesus was *the* Christ, or actually existed.

The mere reference of Tacitus and Suetonius to a noisy and seditious sect of Christians, followers of one Christ, or a *certain* Christ, cannot be admitted as of a feather's weight in the balance of arguments for or against the existence of Jesus ; their testimony, at best, only proving that there were, during the times of Nero and Claudius, certain persons calling themselves disciples of the Christ (the anointed), the Messiah long expected by the Jewish people, whose coming upon earth in power and glory, they believed, was clearly prefigured in the Sacred Books ; but, surely no man in his senses will contend, that it is thereby proved that Jesus was the Christ, or that he really existed ! It will be seen in future numbers, that there were, at the time Jesus is said to have lived, many Christs—twenty at least—all having their fanatic followers—who believed in their divine character ; and whose sincerity will hardly

be called in question, when the fact is recorded that they were willing to lay down their lives in justification of their faith.

If many historians and writers, external to the church, had agreed when Jesus was born—had they given coherent and consistent details as to the prime actions of his life—had even one writer of imposing authority referred to him in such a manner as to preclude the idea of self-deception, or wilful imposition, such evidence in favor of the belief in the man Jesus could not be shuffled off by any kind of evasion, or sophistry; but, when we know that there is not a single writer, except among the Christians, who has mentioned Jesus by name,—never, at most, doing more than allude in an off-hand, indirect manner to *one Christ*, or to a *certain Christ*, of whose turbulent character and seditious practices the breath of vague rumour had conveyed to them crude and indefinite ideas; upon what ground, we ask, can any reasonable man build up a belief in the Jesus of the Evangelists?—especially if he reflect upon the notorious fact, that all intrinsic evidences urged in support of the supposition have been, *in some cases*, actually known as pious forgeries,—while, in *all*, they have been collected by Christians themselves in ages of intellectual darkness and monkish superstition—by men proverbially dishonest, and unscrupulous when the interest of *true religion* was, at stake.

Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius—here is all the external evidence worthy the name, Christian Doctors can furnish—the three great authorities which have scared so many Infidels and Sceptics, cheating them into a belief in Jesus. For example, Mr. Robert Dale Owen, justly considered a first-rate Sceptic, has not been shrewd enough to escape the trap; for in a note* he observes, “We have besides, what I consider sufficient historical evidence of the history of the Jewish philosopher. Tacitus, in the celebrated passage contained in his *Annals*, XV. 44, (of which, says Gibbon, the most sceptical authority is obliged to respect the truth) says, ‘they (the Christians) derived their name and origin from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death by the sentence of the Procurator, Pontius Pilate.’” Now, it plainly appears that we out-scepticize this first-rate Sceptic; as, while this letter proves, that granting Tacitus wrote truly that the Christians called themselves after one they said was the Christ—Jesus of Nazareth, whose history is related in the four gospels, was yet not the Christ, but a purely imaginary being; nor is it a

* See Discussion on the Authenticity of the Bible between Origen Bachefer and Robert Dale Owen.

little odd, that the same writer should have gone so far to expose the hollowness of Jewish testimony in favor of Jesus, and yet, not have seen that the testimony of Tacitus was not of one jot more value. He says, "Philo Judæus, the well-known Jewish historian, *was a contemporary of Christ*. He was sent by the Jews as ambassador to Rome, six or (as some have it) eight years after the usually received date of the death of Jesus. He must have been in, or near Jerusalem at the very time of the crucifixion; yet *not one word is there in his history regarding Christ, or the Christians, or their Scriptures*." Strange that Mr. Owen should have been so near the truth, and not have slipped into it! He continues, "Josephus, who wrote his celebrated history of the Jews some forty or fifty years after Christ's death, *does not even allude to the Christian books, or to the Christian sect*;" adding in a note, that "the famous interpolation, so long triumphantly cited by Christians from the Jewish historian, is now, by common consent, abandoned as a forgery." It is passing strange! marvellous indeed! that so rigid an investigator should not have gone one step further, and seen the whole truth.

With respect to Tacitus and Suetonius, it has already been fully shewn, that as regards the actual existence of Jesus, they prove nothing; nay, they indirectly wound the religion they are brought to support,—for their statements are mutually destructive, as they contradict each other, and, like equal opposing forces, are held in equilibrio. At best, they only shew the etymology of the name Christ, when giving an account of the mischievous and seditious practices of the sect, and the great contempt in which they were held—whilst the renowned passage from Josephus has been abandoned by the stout champions of the holy Jesus as indefensible—a bungling forgery, carrying upon its face the stamp of falsehood—whose author cannot even claim the poor commendation of cleverness—in short, the passage is given up as an interpolation—probably slipped into the body of the work by some pious saint who saw how absolutely naked, and without solid support was the assertion that Jesus had lived, and how necessary it was for the interest of his order that idea should be strengthened by so great an authority as Josephus. Had the paragraph really been written by Josephus, it would certainly have been decisive of the question as to the existence of Jesus; but, as the passage has been reluctantly given up as not genuine, the Christian cause has suffered much in the estimation of thinking men; for it seems incredible, that the

early Christian writers would have stooped to forge, had they not been reduced to desperate shifts, when feeling the weakness of their cause, and in order to conserve popular delusion, they resorted to such scandalous means to perpetuate it. Taking Josephus from the Christians, leaves them absolutely bare of proof—without a shadow of external evidence to support their tottering superstition.

If we turn to the *internal evidence*, what a mass of confusion—what volumes of contradictions, crudities, and outrageous absurdities we everywhere behold! Knavery and folly seem to hold a divided but undisputed empire—forgery and folly in close alliance, making war upon the common sense of mankind; but of all writers, the inspired ones seem to be the most complete blockheads. Thus, we find in the gospel according to Luke, it is written (ch. 2, v. 1, 2) “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.” (“And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.”) Matthew agrees with Luke, that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, (ch. 2. v. 1.) “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem.” Here we have a lucky coincidence of the Evangelists; and until lately no wicked spirit in or out of the church, has ventured to breathe a doubt as to the correctness of Luke’s statement. Mosheim, our readers will remember, writes decidedly as to the place where Christ was born,—though he only ventures to think it probable—*when* saying the place of his birth was Bethlehem, in the land of Palestine.

It is a pity this harmony among the Christian writers, as to the place where the infant Jesus was born, should have been interrupted by other considerations,—as such harmony is rather novel; but it happens unfortunately for the credit of Luke that Jesus *could not have been born in Bethlehem when Cyrenius was governor of Syria*; it is a chronologic impossibility. Luke (or whoever wrote the book bearing his name) seems to have been determined, in getting up a history of Jesus, not to stop at trifles,—and remembering the prophecy of Micah (ch. 5, v. 2)—“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth that is to be ruler of Israel,” &c.; he thought he might with a little dexterity *arrange the history in such a manner as that the prophecy might be fulfilled*; but alas! poor Luke has only succeeded in displaying his own ignorance of facts and contempt

for chronology. Jesus, we are told by Matthew (ch. 2, v. 1) was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king; and Luke begins his tale about the miraculous conception, birth, &c., with (ch. 2, v. 1) "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea," &c.; and Mosheim, though he speaks doubtfully as to the precise time when "the Sun of Righteousness first shone upon the world,"—says, "that which appears most probable is, that it happened about a year and six months before the death of Herod." So all authorities agree in placing the birth of Jesus before the death of Herod. Now it is certain that the census of Cyrenius was neither made under Herod nor during the reign of Archelaus, his successor; for at that time Cyrenius was not yet governor of Syria,—that office being filled during the last years of Herod's reign by Sentius Saturninus, and afterwards by Quintilius Varus: nor was it till many years after the death of Herod that Cyrenius had the government of Syria. It was that magistrate who made the census,—as observed by Josephus (bk. 18, ch. 1) "Now Cyrenius, a Roman senator, and one who had gone through all the magistracies, and had passed through them till he had been consul, and one who on other accounts was of great dignity, came at this time into Syria (that is, after the banishment of Archelaus, and more than ten years after the death of Herod) with a few others,—being sent by Cæsar to be a judge of that nation, *and to take an account of their substance.*" That census must, therefore, have been taken more than ten years after the period when, according to Matthew and Luke, Jesus was born; nay, Luke distinctly says (ch. 2, v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,) "That a decree went out from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. *This taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.* That all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David), to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, *being great with child!*" Well might Schmidt remark, that any attempt to make Luke's account of the census harmonise with chronology, is to honor the Evangelist too much, who has evidently desired to transport Mary to Bethlehem; and that having accomplished *that*, he left dates and facts to arrange themselves as best they might. It is probable Dr. Mosheim never noticed this slight chronological error of ten or a dozen years made by the inspired Luke, or he would, perhaps, have

got rid of it by a—"not the slightest consequence." When Dr. Adam Clarke was in a hobble, commentating upon the 1st Kings, 20, 29, where we read that "The children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day; and a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left," the worthy Doctor relieved himself by declaring, he "thought that the word 'wall' was a mistranslation, and that *disorder* or *confusion* would be better, or a *burning wind* better still, as the number twenty and seven thousand was *enormous*!" Surely, it is pitiful that no commentator will step forward and do something for poor Luke, and *wall-up* his reputation. It is true, Tertullian deals with the matter manfully, and insists upon giving quite a *new reading to the text*—attributes the census to Saturninus, putting into the text either his name, or that of Quintilius Varus,—which, it must be owned, is a summary mode of dealing with difficulties—slicing off a moiety of inspiration, as monarchs in the East do mens' heads when they hinder their policy, or disturb their repose. It is clear, that such a mode of dealing with inspired writings may be locally convenient, but must be generally pernicious in its consequences,—and to a reflecting mind, it seems odd that men should so pertinaciously look for all truth, where already has been discovered so much of error.

It is clear, therefore, from what has been advanced (and much more might be added), that the account given by Luke of the reasons which induced Joseph and Mary to Journey to Bethlehem while the latter was pregnant, *cannot be true*; and it seems likely, as Strauss observes—"that Luke, or somebody else, was anxious that the character of Jesus should in all respects be in harmony with the prophecy, and determined to find reasons why Mary should be at Bethlehem when Jesus was born; which reasons he advanced with the more boldness, as he had a very confused idea of the political state of the times, and was entirely ignorant of the numerous difficulties inherent to that combination. Thus (adds Strauss) we have not a term fixed for the date of the birth of Christ; nor an explanation of the cause which led to his birth at Jerusalem. If then, we are justified in saying no other reasons can be found than those furnished by Luke—that we should admit Jesus was born at Bethlehem—we have not absolutely a single guarantee that Bethlehem was the place of his birth."

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 27.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

"I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I, even I,* am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour."—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The most stiff believers in the actual existence of Jesus, called Nazarene, and born in Bethlehem, according to gospel, must now have strange misgivings, feel much puzzled, and shake the head as between little hope and giant despair, however, *at first*, they may have smiled at our attempt to disabuse the human mind of a most pernicious error. There are strong indications of a *tremblement de terre* in the Christian world, and all who have hitherto stood with the fatal confidence of ignorance upon the unexamined evidence urged in proof of the reality of Jesus, feel the ground rock beneath their feet—the rent having, *at last*, reached the foundation!

It has been seen that the writings of the early Christian Saints and Fathers were lamentably deficient in truth, that *they forged upon principle and deceived by system*—nay, worse yet than mere forgers and deceivers, for some of them did not hesitate first to manufacture the lie, and afterwards coolly charge it upon their opponents! It has been seen that by far the larger number of Pagan historians either never heard of Jesus, and his extraordinary works, or what is almost equally fatal to the vulgar belief, thought it a trumped-up affair, and, therefore, the sect called Christian was so wretchedly contemptible as to be unworthy of notice—while the few writers of consequence who condescended to notice them, wrote in

a most disparaging and off-hand manner, many of them including their notice in a single line ; which kind of treatment would hardly have been so uniform, had the followers or disciples of Jesus possessed any weight in the moral scale, or been, in short, men of character and influence ! It has been seen that those authors of acknowledged reputation and ability, as Hierocles, Porphyrius, and Celsus, who wrote vigorously in opposition to Christianity, were most shamefully treated by its supporters, their writings disfigured, and, in all possible cases, most religiously destroyed—whereas, all writings in defence of Christianity were as religiously preserved ; and so completely successful were they (the Christians) in the work of destruction, that not long after Constantine, men of taste and learning who sought for truth, were compelled to grope for it amid that darkness the Christian priests had wilfully created. It has been seen that the believers in Jesus are left without a single classic authority—without one author who writes distinctly, and in a *there can be no mistake* manner respecting him ; they do not, in truth, furnish a single argument, if not *against* the Christians—nay, not even a peg to hang an argument upon ! It has been seen that the gospel writers were as ignorant about the when and the where, the time and the place, in short, *all the circumstances respecting the infancy of Jesus*, as the meanest country bumpkin ; that Luke's account of the birth, and the reasons which carried Joseph and Mary (then pregnant with Jesus) to Bethlehem, is a huge blunder, a wretched attempt at reconciliation between the made-up character of Jesus and chronologic fact ; while Mosheim, who has stupidly followed in the wake of the inspired blunderer, has been theologically belwethered into a ditch of inextricable confusion and absurdity, affording another to be added to the many lamentable specimens of the learnedly imbecile, who half blinded in the fog of fable, and terrified by childish superstitions, are occupied by *chateaux en espagne*, or *castles in the fog*, and lend their fine talents to delusion and imposture ! It has been seen, finally, that the Christian cause can derive no support from Josephus—nay, the arrow said to have been plucked from the Jewish historian's quiver, and used by the Christians, was their own poisoned barb, which has mortally wounded themselves by a kind of re-bound. Indeed, making clear to the world that Josephus did not write the passage in question, is to drive the last nail into the coffin of Christianity ! To make this like "*the handwriting on the wall*," another paragraph or two will be devoted to it.

The famous passage given in the last number is the alpha and omega of *external evidence* in favor of the actual existence of the man Jesus; this we have already shewn in part, and the truth will appear more and more luminous as we proceed; but that cannot be dignified by the name "*evidence*," which has been incontrovertibly proved a forged interpolation. All familiar with Jewish history know that Josephus flourished, and was held in much honor, at the epoch Jesus is said to have lived; he, moreover, took a very active part in the political and religious transactions of his times; it is, therefore, quite inconceivable that a man called Jesus could have distinguished himself in so peculiar and striking a manner as Jesus is represented to have done, without receiving from Josephus a *special notice*,—it is inconceivable, we say, that Josephus should have failed to mention him—for he, of all men then living, must have felt interested in, and been best acquainted with, all that concerned the honor, fidelity, and religion of the Jewish nation—yet, not so much as a single word about a man-god, prophet, or mere man, is to be found in his voluminous work, save the one that has been thrust in neck and heels by some clumsy well-wisher to Christianity. Never was there a more audacious and disgusting forgery—a more base, fraudulent, and designing trick to serve an end, without even the poor apology of cleverness—not even the redeeming feature of talent to render more tolerable its odious face—and the blockhead who so *palpably* lied, stands recorded as the most blockish of the would-be imposers upon the credulity of mankind. Verily, it is new cloth, or a new rag, in an old garment—for it is not only different in style, but the color, and what may be called the texture of the passage marks it *patch-work*! The difference between the paltriest mosaic and the purest gold is not more complete and striking, than the branded passage in Josephus compared with the true history. In a word, it is the *ne plus ultra* of literary bungling and sneaking criminality.

It is amazing and amusing with what cool impudence the same worthies, who, when the passage was considered genuine, lauded to the skies the truthfulness and high historic reputation of Josephus, making him a very angel of light, and cracking up his authority as irresistible, have *pirouetted*, since the lie was detected, as with a magic wand, at once transforming their *angel of light* into a *demon of darkness*! This is not to be wondered at; it is simply curious and excessively amusing, for they knew their all was staked, as regarded *external evidence* in favor of Jesus, upon his testimony;

they knew, besides, that if Josephus did not bear testimony *for* them, he must *against* them, as the silence of so able, well-informed, and generally impartial historian as Josephus, must speedily palsy the faith in Jesus, and ultimately annihilate it!—for, we repeat, it is incredible, and quite inadmissible, that an incarnate God, a prophet, or mere man, should have performed one tithe of what is related in gospel history of Jesus—performed too under the very nose of Josephus, without his deigning so much as to give it a corner in his history!

This argument receives additional force from the consideration that Josephus *has specially mentioned John the Baptist*—which passage has never for once been suspected as not genuine, not a whisper has been raised against *its* authenticity—because, neither in the account itself, the manner of it, nor in the relationship which it holds to the rest of the history, is there any thing to challenge suspicion. The passage runs thus, “Now, some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod’s army came from God, and that very justly as a punishment, against John that was called the Baptist; for Herod slew him who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him if they made of it, not in order to the putting away [or the remission] of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body, supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness. Now when many others came in crowds against him, for they were greatly moved [or pleased] by hearing his words, Herod who feared lest the great influence John had over the people, might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion (for they seemed ready to do any thing he should advise), thought it best by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late. Accordingly, he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod’s suspicious temper, to Macherns, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death. Now, the Jews had an opinion, that the destruction of this army was sent as a punishment upon Herod, and a mark of God’s displeasure against him.”

Before taking final leave of Josephus and the Christian interpolation—as we are determined *there shall be no mistake*—we here restate in the plainest possible English, that although Josephus lived

at the time Christ is said to have existed, the name of Jesus is not once mentioned by him in any of his writings—therefore, let every reader understand, that to say—as ill-informed people do—that Josephus wrote about Jesus Christ, is to utter falsehood,—the name never having appeared in his history of the Jews, till it was smuggled there most clumsily in an edition edited by Bishop Warburton. This crushing fact, we challenge the whole religious world to a disproof of, which, if they are not in a condition to furnish, it must appear, that whoever declares the Jewish historian has mentioned the existence of Jesus Christ, asserts an unconscious or a deliberate falsehood.

It now remains to brush away a few more cobweb assertions about the authority of Tacitus, urged by one of the most noted and pure minded of modern sceptics, who, it was mentioned in the last Letter, seemed to be on the right road in his reflections upon the subject; but had most unaccountably stopped short in his career.

When his opponent, Mr. Origen Bachelier asserts the divine nature of Christianity on the ground that it “succeeded in effecting a revolution in the opinions and manners of the civilized world, to which there is no parallel in the history of mankind;” and urges in confirmation of this view, that Tacitus about A. D. speaking of Christianity says, “This pernicious superstition, though checked for awhile, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, but reached the city of Rome. At first, they only were apprehended who confessed themselves to be of that sect; afterwards, a vast multitude were discovered and cruelly punished.” Mr. R. D. Owen, in his reply to the above, observes, “Watson and Leslie set about proving the existence of Moses and Jesus. I have never denied either; but, *I confess, I am surprised to find the proofs so scanty!*” adding in a note, “Tacitus’s famous passage appears to me, however, *sufficient evidence* of the existence of Jesus.”

There is no accounting for mental hallucinations, even in first-rate minds; but, really it is astonishing, that so bold and generally accurate an investigator should have fallen into the pit so warily dug for him by his opponent; though, it must be confessed, that it was not necessary for his *then* argument to disprove the existence of Jesus, as the discussion turned upon the authenticity of the Scriptures—so that the existence of Jesus was only touched upon *en passant*; otherwise, his surprise at finding the proofs *so scanty*, would probably have ended in the full conviction, not only of their

scantiness, but that, in reality, the testimony of Tacitus, which to him is *sufficient evidence* of the existence of Jesus, proved nothing more than the existence at a certain period after the supposed death of Christ in Rome, and other places, a number of people calling themselves Christians. If this is all the proof that can be furnished in favor of the actuality of the man Jesus, it is scanty indeed! and has been so completely torn to shreds in this work, that we are convinced, when it is generally read, all will at once acknowledge how glaring is this error, which evidently has hitherto maintained its ground from paucity of information, and a misunderstanding of the passage in question. But, in fact, Mr. Owen's *own reply to himself* renders superfluous any further remark on our part with respect to the evidence furnished by Tacitus, Suetonius, and the rest; for in the very next page in which he says "*he is surprised to find the proofs so scanty*, but that the famous passage in Tacitus is, however, *sufficient evidence* for him of the actual existence of Jesus, he adds, "*Now what does all this amount to? Simply to this—that in the reigns of Claudius and Nero, a sect existed called Christians.* Who denies this? Not I for one." Nor do we deny it; we do not deny that a sect called Christians existed in Rome under Claudius, Nero, or Tiberius; which, in good truth, is *all the evidence amounts to*. Then how, in the name of wonder, can evidence that only proves the existence of the Christian sect, be *sufficient evidence* for a first-rate sceptic of the existence of the man Jesus? Shade of Aristotle, hover o'er and enlighten us! for this kind of reasoning passeth our understanding! Here then is the thread, of hair like tenuity, by which the sword of reason is suspended over the neck of folly; here are all the immense heaps of proof of which theologians so loudly boast, dwindled down to the *scanty* passage in Tacitus, which is left alone in its glory to bear the brunt of the battle; when, lo! and behold! upon a little investigation, this renowned Christian pivot, the point cardinal, on which *hinged* the existence of Jesus, and left first-rate scepticism dumbfounded, is discovered to be a *pointe mathématique*, having neither length, breadth, nor thickness—a shadowy unreal mockery of proof, ending in a demonstration, not that Jesus Christ, spoken of in the gospels, was a *bona fide* individual, or even had more than an ideal or imaginary existence; but that *one* Christ, or a *certain* Christ, lived somewhere—no one knows where; did—no one seems to know what; said—what no one seems to have taken the slightest pains either to

hear, collect, or understand. All the proof amounting simply to this, that in the reigns of Claudius and Nero existed a sect called Christians, &c. This is *all* the much lauded evidence proves, and it is almost needless for us to reiterate that the *external evidence* of such writers is miserably defective, nay, the two *unique* on whom all Christians mainly rely, Suetonius and Tacitus, balance each other, as our readers cannot have forgotten that Suetonius speaks of a *certain* Christ practising sedition at Rome during the reign of Claudius—while Tacitus writes of *one* Christ, put to death during the reign of Tiberius, by Pontius Pilate the Procurator. We may believe one of these accounts, both, or neither; the latter will be by far the easiest, and certainly the safest course—though it is exceedingly possible, that there being *so many men* calling themselves *the* Christ during these and succeeding reigns, Suetonius wrote about one, Tacitus another, and somebody else a third, and so on; but here it may be useful to mention, that the account in Tacitus is preferred by the Christians, as it harmonizes with the legend—which legend, as shewn in the early numbers of this work, is a solar fable. So much for the external evidence furnished by Tacitus, Suetonius, Plinius, *et hoc genus omne*.

Those who still maintain the existence of Jesus, thus beaten off Pagan, must take refuge on Christian ground, cling to the gospel history, and the writings of the saints; the hollowness of the latter have been sufficiently exposed to prevent any reasoning mind from reposing confidence in them, except when their relations do not outrage probability, or are in harmony with other external evidences, and the general operations or modes of nature; for the scandalous manner in which the early Christians endeavoured to crush all opposition, by persecution and bare-faced fraud, must render very suspicious and of doubtful value any gospels they judged to be true.

Bishop Watson complains that Islamism was established by the sword, as though he forgot, or never knew, that it was the sword established and maintained the authority of the early Christian Church. The famous edict of the emperor Constantine issued against the Heretics (it has been remarked by a modern author) was in the same century in which the books of the New Testament were declared canonical. If the council which so declared them shared the common character of the age, it was composed of bishops, who exhibited to their flocks the contagious example of arrogance, luxury,

effeminacy, animosity, strife, with other vices too numerous to mention. A fine assemblage of holy men, truly !—admirably qualified to choose the true gospels, and carefully separate them from heaps of spurious trash and apocryphal books with which the age abounded. Mosheim observes that in the fourth century, “the monstrous error was almost universally adopted ; *that errors in religion*, when maintained and adhered to *after proper admonition*, were punishable with *civil penalties and corporal tortures* : multitudes (says the same historian) were drawn into the profession of Christianity, *not by the power of conviction and argument*, but by *the prospect of gain, and the fear of punishment*.” Again, had the Saracens been infected with the same odious spirit of persecution that possessed the Crusaders, there would not, perhaps, have remained a single Christian in that part of the world (Asia). But, though these Infidels were chargeable with various crimes, and had frequently treated the Christians in a rigorous and injurious manner, yet they looked with horror on those scenes of persecution which the Latins exhibited as the exploits of heroic piety, and considered it as the highest and most atrocious mark of cruelty and injustice, *to force unhappy men, by fire and sword, to abandon their religious principles—or to put them to death, merely because they refused to change their opinions*. We ask, is it to such monsters in human shape as these early Christians, we are to look for authentic history?—men more cruel and lustful of blood than the Infidels and uncultivated Saracens, who looked with carnage and horror on scenes of persecution which the cruelly vindictive fanaticism of Christians had given birth to, when, like hungry Tigers in their fierce rage, they covered the fertile fields of Asia with the blood and bones of millions ; and oh ! diabolical superstition ! when

Earth trembled as the smoke
Of thy revenge ascended up to heaven,
Blotting the constellations ; and the cries
Of millions, butchered in sweet confidence
And unsuspecting peace, even when the bonds
Of safety were confirmed, by wordy oaths
Sworn *in the name of Christ*, rung through the land,
Whilst innocent babes writhed on thy stubborn spear,
And thou did'st laugh to hear the mother's shriek
Of maniac gladness as the sacred steel
Felt cold in her torn entrails !!

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LETTER 28.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

A careful and unprejudiced reading of Biblical history, together with the Talmudic, or *traditional* writings of the Jews, would speedily disabuse all minds, capable of grasping the true meaning of the texts, of those pernicious errors which now prevail, as to the real character of those books, and as to the sources and support of the opinions, religious and political, held by the Jews themselves, before and since the captivity; errors pregnant with mischief, which check the free current of thought, choking up by an unreasoning bigotry the source of truth, and by the weight of an odious moral tyranny, deprive the human mind of that elastic spring which is its best preservative against religious and political corruption.

The researches of Schoettgenius are of great value, and may be recommended as containing the most complete account of the texts which have been interpreted by the ancient Rabbis, or Jewish doctors, concerning the Messiah (*the anointed*), who was so long and ardently expected to appear on earth, and restore to even more than their pristine splendour, the fallen glories of the Children of Israel; when that state of things, called in popular language, *Christ's Kingdom, the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven*, would be established, and righteousness rule over all the earth.

There is no people of whom we have any records, who have

suffered so much for conscience sake as the Jewish ; no people whose religious opinions have been so foully abused, *without being understood* ; none who have so completely earned by a stubborn adherence to the faith and the law of their fathers—the hate and opprobrium of frantic bigotry. Literally they have had “ coals of fire heaped upon their heads ;” and there are not a few Christians of the nineteenth century, who would willingly, to use Miltonic phraseology, rekindle the torch of persecution, by the almost expiring embers of fanaticism.

The excessive ignorance that prevailed, and still prevails, as to Jewish character, habits, and opinions—their modes of feeling and modes of writing, so peculiar and so strictly *national*—their historic records, which stand out or apart from all others as the reflex of the mind of a people who were and are an isolation amid the crowd of humanity, is at the root of such senseless injustice.

It may seem strange, but it is unquestionably true, that little as is known of Egyptian or Indian polity and religious character—still less is really understood of the polity and religious conceptions, hopes, and aspirations of the chosen people of God (as they delight to style themselves) ; nay, among the many who rail against the Jews, as a stiffnecked race, obstinate unbelievers, and crucifiers of the living God (!)—few, indeed, have the most distant idea *why* the Jews refused at first to believe that one Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, or anointed king, promised by God himself, through the mouths of the prophets, to the descendants of Israel ; or *why* it is, after all that has been written for their conversion—after all the cruel persecutions which the Christian world, to its shame, has for ages inflicted upon that unhappy race—they still strenuously resist the Jesus of the gospels, and still deny that such a man (even though his actuality be admitted) was the promised Messiah, who should be (Zech. 14, v. 9) “ the Lord and king over all the earth ; in that day when there shall be one Lord, and his name one.” Who should “ bring them (chap. 8, v. 8), and they should dwell in the midst of Jerusalem ; and they should be his people, and he their God, in truth and in righteousness.”

The bigot nation, as the bigot individual, is either the crouching slave, or the intolerable tyrant!—enduring, nay kissing, the rod that chastiseth, or *inflicting* stripes : in both conditions bigotry is the frantic hater of all it *will* not or *cannot* comprehend. Let the bigot stand in all his native nakedness—he is the cur licking the hand of its punisher. Arm him to the teeth in authority—there is

no vice, no cruelty, he is incapable of. His appetite for vengeance is only whetted by its gratification ; and like the tiger, after tasting blood, becomes more fierce and ungovernable !

That the Jewish nation was a proud nation, swallowed up in vanity, their own literature abundantly proves ; that they were and are the dupes of appearances, shadowy, aerial conceptions, having their source in national pride, no enlightened Jew will deny ; and it must be admitted that their shamefully credulous ignorance, love of the marvellous, and all that flattered or soothed their fatal and most fallacious hope of universal dominion, has only been surpassed by the still more fatally credulous ignorance of the Christian world. The terms *Jew* and *credulous man* have been for ages synonymous, convertible terms, in the nations called civilized ; yet have those who stigmatized them thus, as far outstripped them in credulity and the love of persecution, as the light wing of the swallow outstrips the dull and heavy plumage of the raven.

That it is better to do even good *with* a reason than without one, has passed into a proverb ; but bigots set this and all other wise maxims at defiance ; and therefore it is that nine-tenths of the Christian world hate the Jews, without a reason, or caring to search for one,—unless hating a Jew because he is a Jew, can be considered a reason ; for, though it is evident the prime cause why the Jews are stigmatized as “ *an accursed race, an abomination, and a pest upon God’s earth,*” is, their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, and the idle tale about the supposed crucifixion of *the Christ* ; yet this harsh spirit has not been displayed towards them after an examination of their reasons for their faith, but in obedience to bigot passion.

The stern and uncompromising manner in which, from the first, they rejected the fictional history of the Nazarene, was called, as all disbelief is, obstinacy and stiffneckedness ; the generally credulous, but in this particular, firmly incredulous Jews, were by Christian accusers hunted over the face of the earth ; treated like wild boars, held at bay by the spears of their pursuers. Their traditions were scorned ; the voice of prophecy, which *they believed* was contained in their sacred histories, was despised and set at nought ; whilst, scattered abroad by lawless authority—carried before the breath of persecution, like sand in the desert blast ; despised of the nations ; their name a bye-word ; their untold sufferings the theme of demoniac laughter and derision—this people furnished the world’s choicest memorial—its best proof of superstition’s horrors—

Foul superstition ! howsoever disguised—
 Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
 For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
 Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss !
 Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross ?

The Jewish writings, do not furnish finer examples of philosophy than many others called profane ; but no others contain such numerous examples of humanity, seen in its various phases, and under every variety of aspect. We may regret, with Volney, that the mind of man should be enclosed within such narrow boundaries, and be obliged to content itself with what, in a universal sense, must be considered as the mere scrap of knowledge, contained in Jewish literature ; but the fact, however it may be lamented, is yet a fact, that we have no histories of nations, but merely detached isolated accounts of this or that people ; which paucity of information, as regards the universal condition of humanity, fosters local and most pernicious prejudices, which a more enlarged view would speedily destroy.

Hennel remarks, "It is not surprising to find in the poetic writings of the Old Testament, extravagant descriptions of a kingdom of Israel, which should cover the earth—and of a great prince, who should restore the throne of David. The beautiful anticipations which, under various forms, have existed in nearly all the nations, of the future perfection of the earth, were in the minds of the Jews blended in a peculiar manner with the hopes and fortunes of Israel ; on this subject each prophet or poet indulged in his own fancies—but one prevalent notion seems to have been, that this kingdom would be established, and their final triumph over the nations effected—not so much by military means, in which they were obviously deficient, as by some special intervention of their protector, the God of Israel." Now, it is certainly not surprising, that a people with such strong passions, and poetically religious temperament, after ruling many nations—tasting the sweets of an almost unresisted authority for more than 800 years, should, in their decline, or after their fall, sigh for the fallen glories of Israel, and long for the "*yet a little while,*" when the Lord of Hosts would (Haggai 2, v. 6, 7,) "shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and shake all the nations, and the desire of all nations should come, and fill the house of Israel with his glory ;"—"When (Zech. 14, v. 3) the Lord should go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle ;" for the vanity of nations

is no less strong and inveterate, than the vanity of individuals, which is generally in the ratio of ignorance; and though it may be humiliated, it cannot be destroyed; nay, it seems to gather strength from its very weakness,—and, like the struggling gladiator, whose blood flows from no mortal part, will gain a new energy with each succeeding wound,—as we commonly see nations and individuals increase in pride, amid the wreck of their fortunes. It cannot, therefore, be matter of *surprise*, that the Jews should have cherished the hope of a Saviour, a political Messiah, who should reign over Israel, and restore their nation to its wonted lustre—which delusive idea pervades all their writings from the era of the Babylonish captivity: and, as remarked by Hennell—great were their transports “when Cyrus permitted the small remnant of pure Jews to re-occupy their own land, and to re-build their temple and city, as their most extravagant hopes seemed about to be realized. A new era opened upon them, and they were in the way to take rank among the nations; and if this could be attained, out of a state of general servitude, a patriotic Jew might easily believe his nation destined in the end, to eclipse Egypt and Assyria.”

The idea which to-day would seem preposterous and absurd to the nations of Europe—if fallen under the yoke of slavery—of a deliverer coming in power and glory “to (Isaiah 14, v. 2) *take them captive*, whose captives they were,” to the Jews, who lived after the captivity, was both soothing and credible; it outraged not *their* idea of the possible; for with them, all things were possible to Jehovah, who could miraculously deliver his chosen people out of the hands of their enemies, and pluck them by his divine will from the furnace of affliction—a brand not consumed by the fire; for, as observed by Strauss,* “the Hebrew people, during the whole course of their political existence, never had a clear idea of history; their historic books, the most recent, those of Maccabees, for example, and even the works of Josephus, are not free from marvellous and most extravagant recitals. In fact, there are no ideas clearly historic among a people who comprehend not the indissolubility of the chain of finite causes, and the impossibility of miracles.” Now, we know that all the Jewish books abound in recitals, which, if strictly true, were clearly miraculous,—thus breaking to pieces the chain of finite causes; which impossible things were firmly believed in, before and after the decline of Jewish authority; but

* Introduction to The Life of Jesus.

such crude and idle tales were never so anxiously welcomed, or devoured with such avidity, as after the captivity; for then, as it was natural with a vainglorious, credulous, and superstitious multitude, everything that strengthened the prevailing idea that the temple should be re-built with more than its ancient splendor, by the appearance of an earthly king, who should make (Haggai 1, v. 9) "the glory of the latter house greater than of the former," was held as true by a people who had "*no ideas clearly historic*;" whose limited intelligence permitted them not to see "*the impossibility of miracles*."

The Jews seem rather to have been corrupted than improved by their bondage in Babylon; for, before their intercourse with the *Mother of Harlots*, they seem to have held much juster notions of things, than after; for, before the captivity, we hear nothing about the *nature of Gods*, nor the *idea of the immortality of the soul*; which dogmas the Jews evidently picked up in Babylon, without fully comprehending them, that is, they did not grasp the precise ideas held on such subjects by the ancient philosophers and mystics of the East. The Bible wears evident marks of the liberties taken with it subsequent to that era; for the posterior Jews, infected with Gnosticism, wished, and did not fail to incorporate their mystical jargon with the anterior history. The devil is the property of the modern Jews; for those who lived prior to the captivity, believed neither in a devil, nor have we reason to believe they had any conception that the soul was immortal. The soul was supposed to perish with the body; or, rather, the soul or vital manifestations were supposed to be matter, in the performance of its functions; or, viewed in its various relations and conditions, merely a modification of the eternally active power inherent in matter.

Their opinions upon matter and spirit seemed, in fact, the exact counterpart of those held by the learned among the ancient Egyptians, who, according to Aristotle, thought matter the first principle of all things, and that the present forms arose out of an eternal chaos, which, *prior to creation*, contained in a state of darkness, all the materials of future beings; which is not a hairsbreadth from the opinions of the famous Spinoza, who held that the soul, or thinking principle, in man and brutes, was but an attribute of the sole substance called matter, which eternally produces endless combinations of itself; while the more modern and hardly less famous Dr. Priestly, in his work on Matter and Spirit, shews that

the last line of the text (Gen. 2, v. 19) "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living *creature*, that was the name thereof;" *should* run thus, "And whatsoever Adam called every living *soul*," &c. : the Hebrew, interpreted by textual doctors, *creature*, really meaning *soul*, that is, substance performing its functions : hence the expressions, "and man became a *living soul* ; they slew a hundred thousand *souls* ; they left not a *soul to breathe*," &c. ; and it is only after the captivity we hear of devils, angels, and souls, distinct from substance.

It is true, we find in 1st Chron. 21, v. 1, that "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel ;" which is the first time the name Satan appears in the Old Testament. As justly observed by a modern writer,* "The absence of this personage from the writings *prior* to the captivity, seems to prove that the Jews, in their intercourse with the Babylonians, imbibed a part of their theology, which inculcated the existence of *two* principles, under the names of Ormuzd and Ahrimanes. It is evident that the author of the Chronicles attributes to the *bad* spirit the act which the author of Samuel attributes to the *good* ; for, in 2nd Sam. 24, v. 1, we read, 'And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.' The writer in the Chronicles was doubtless scandalised at the Deity punishing a sin which he had just before provoked David to commit." The same writer adds, "The word in Psalm 9, v. 6, need not be interpreted of any malignant spirit, but it may stand for adversary generally. The date of Job, where the word occurs three or four times, is unknown."

With their knowledge of the dogma of immortal souls, the Jews got the first glimpse of the Devil ; so, taking the two together, it is exceedingly doubtful whether they were much the gainers thereby ; but the fact is established, that the old Jews had no notion either of the Devil or the immortality of the soul, till the mystical philosophers, called Gnostics, taught them their sublime dreamery and devilry, some five or six hundred years before the Christian era ; and it appears from Mosheim, that their mystical philosophy created much evil about the time that it, to him, appeared *most probable* the Saviour appeared ; for he observes, "no philosophy was so de-

* See article Old Testament, in Christian Reformer, No. 44.

trimental to the Christian religion, as that which was styled *gnosis*, or science, i. e. *the way to the true knowledge of the Deity*; and which we have above called the *oriental doctrine*, in order to distinguish it from the Grecian philosophy." The worthy doctor seemed, indeed, disposed to be harsh, and *half* angry with these Gnostics' notions of Jesus Christ, which he calls impious and extravagant; but to our mind, their notions about Jesus, as far as they can be understood, are the most rational possible—perhaps, that is because *they exactly correspond with our own*; for, according to Mosheim, they *denied his deity, and they rejected his humanity*, upon the supposition that every thing concrete and corporeal is, in itself, essentially and intrinsically evil. "From hence (continues the doctor), the greatest part of the Gnostics denied that Christ was clothed with a *real body*, or that he suffered *really* for the sake of mankind, the pains and sorrows which he is said to have sustained, in the sacred history." Now, as it is clear that Christ, if he lived at all, had a body, and it is equally clear that a body is a *real body*—for a body not *real*, would be *nobody* at all—and as the Gnostics' declared just after Jesus is said to have lived and died, that "he was not clothed with a *real body*," why logic would be beggared to prove *better* that we entirely agree with the Gnostics; for if Jesus neither had a *real body* nor *really* suffered on the cross, or anywhere else, for the sake of mankind—if he were neither *divine nor human*—neither *deity nor humanity*—what in the name of all the mystics at once was he? As to the senseless lunacy that the Gnostics have mingled with this account of Christ, about his *unreal* body being the son of God, *pleroma*, or habitation of the Everlasting Father, for the happiness of miserable mortals, it may be safely averred, that none but the Everlasting Father can know what or where the said *pleroma* is; or how a body clothed in *unrealness*—that is, *a body without a body*—could be sent for the happiness of miserable mortals! Mosheim complains that they entertained unworthy ideas, both of Christ's person and offices; whereas, to us it appears, that *they held no ideas at all of him*, worthy or unworthy; for how could they have any idea of a Christ, *neither God nor man*—neither with form, substance, color, or attributes—a Christ, in short, who neither had a *real body*, nor *really* suffered—nor *really* was anything, suffered anything, or did anything—save in the imaginations of men!

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 29. WEEKLY. ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

The mental condition of the Jews before and at the time so many *false Christs appeared*, was touched upon in our last, where it was shewn that the Jews never fully comprehended the grand idea that “the chain of finite causes is indissoluble,” and “the impossibility of miracles,” which idea, it may be safely affirmed, must be conceived by all people, before they can be guaranteed from political, moral, or religious delusion.

The idea that a miracle is impossible, and involves in it an absurdity, because the eternal chain of causation cannot be broken (there being no exceptions to Nature’s mode of operation) has the experience of the wisest of all ages for its basis—that invaluable experience which, though not admissible as logical demonstration, is a practically certain support, though not perfectly safe, is nevertheless, man’s safest teacher. Once allow the possibility of a miracle, and that moment is reason and sound philosophy yoked to the car of wild and visionary speculation. We hold, therefore, Strauss was justified in his assertion that the Jews never had an historic age; for that which is properly historic, is a relation of facts, which facts harmonize with experience, and admit no element purely imaginative. Of this Jewish love of the marvellous, Dr. Prideaux, an able commentator, seems fully aware, for he observes, “that the Jews, after

the return from the Babylonish captivity, to the time of our Saviour, were much given to *religious romances*, as appears from the apocryphal books still extant, which are of this sort." Surely, it would be idle to look among a people given to religious romancings, for clear ideas of what is truly historic; besides, all writers admit, it was confusion worse confounded, that prevailed among the Jews, from the Babylonish captivity up to the period Jesus is said to have lived; nor were they the vulgar merely who were infected with the love of the marvellous, and ready to swallow every gross and idle fiction, for even Josephus, who had some pretensions to philosophy, did not scruple to set forth, with all gravity, the most outrageous balderdash. Of Solomon, he says, "God enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science beneficial to man; he composed many incantations also, by which distempers are alleviated, and he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they *drive away demons* so that they never return; and this method of cure is of great force unto this day." Again, he says, speaking of one Eleazer, a caster out of devils, upon the principles of Solomon, "He, Eleazer, when he would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he held such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon were shewn very manifestly."

One thing here is shewn manifestly enough, which is, that the historian who wrote the above trash, whatever may be said of his skill, had very little wisdom; except, perhaps, that crooked, left-handed wisdom, which Euripides ascribes to certain sages who have *two tongues*; the one to say the truth, the other that accommodates itself to the times." And if we suppose that Josephus was wiser than he could afford to appear, the state of the multitude must have been deplorable indeed to require the wagging of so accommodating a tongue; and if he believed what he himself related, such belief establishes his character as a relater of truth, but destroys his reputation for wisdom—either way, however, the Jewish people must have been excessively credulous, which is all that concerns our present argument.

Corruption and credulity are rarely far asunder, and in the times of which we treat, the Jewish people, drawn into the vortex of superstition, were corrupt as they were credulous. Mosheim ob-

serves, "that the period in which our Saviour descended upon earth may justly be styled the pacific age, if we compare it with the preceding times;" if so, in the name of all that is vile, what must have been the condition of the Jews in ages preceding, when, in this "justly styled the pacific age," the same writer tells us "no public laws prohibited the sports of gladiators, the exercise of unnatural lusts, the licentiousness of divorce, the custom of exposing infants, and of procuring abortions—nor the frontless atrocity of consecrating public stews and brothels to certain divinities;" "at the time of Christ's appearance, (he adds) the wisest among mankind looked upon the whole system which then prevailed, as a just object of ridicule and contempt; at that time the religion of the Romans, as well as their arms, had extended itself through a great part of the world:" an odd kind of pacific age, truly! If such were their peaceful times, what shall we think of their warlike? though it can hardly be denied a Roman peace was sometimes even more fatal to virtue and independence, than a Roman war. Hence, the expression of Tacitus, "*they made a desert, and called it peace.*"

It is not wonderful, then, that the Jewish people should have groaned under the Roman yoke, and sighed after some mighty deliverer, who should be king over all the earth (Ezek. 14. 9), whose arrow should go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God blow the trumpet, and go with the whirlwinds of the South (Zech. 14). For Mosheim justly says, that at the time he supposes Christ to have appeared, "errors of a very pernicious kind had infected the whole body of the people, and the more learned part of the nation were deluded upon points of the highest consequence. All looked for a deliverer, but not such a one as God had promised. Instead of a meek and *spiritual* Saviour, they expected a formidable and warlike prince, to break their chains, and set them at liberty from the Roman yoke." What Mosheim meant by such a one as God had promised, it is hard to guess; but if he intended to convey the idea that the Jews were not justified in their expectation of a formidable and warlike prince, who should break their chains, &c., by an appeal to Scriptures, and the sayings of the prophets, nothing can be more erroneous; for they clearly allude to the coming in power and glory of a *political* Saviour, or *Saviours*, for in Obadiah we read (21) "And Saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." Surely, Mosheim never read the texts (Isa. 32, 1, 18), "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and my people shall dwell in peaceful

habitations, &c.”—(Jer. 23. 5). “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a *king* shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment upon all the earth.” See also, Malachi 3. 4.—Joel 1. 15, 11, 27, 32,—3. 1, 2, 9, 21,—Ezek. 39. 21, 22,—Haggai 11. 6, 7,—Hosea 11. 21, 23; and a host of others, that curious readers may refer to at their leisure. Hennell, who had paid much attention to Jewish history, observes, that “the kings of Judah were called the Lord’s anointed; therefore the expected restorer of their throne came to be described emphatically as *the anointed*, or *Messiah*; and it became a favourite literary amusement with the Jews, to find passages of their Scripture applicable to him.” Add to which, that the word *Christ* or *anointed*, always conveyed the idea of *king*, as may be seen in Sam. 24. 5, where David exclaims “the Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master (Saul) the *Lord’s anointed*.” How, then, can Mosheim be justified in his ignorant assertion, that the Jews in looking for a political king, a formidable and warlike Saviour, were looking for what God had not promised; for if it be admitted God ever promised anything by the mouths of the Jewish prophets, such prophecies clearly point to a Christ who should deliver them out of their enemies’ hands, and establish on earth his temporal kingdom, where he was to sit upon the throne of his glory “in that holy Jerusalem (13, 15, 18), built up with sapphires, and emeralds, and precious stones; its walls and towers, and battlements, with pure gold; its streets paved with beryl, and carbuncle, and the stones of Ophir; when all her streets should say hallelujah.”

Here then, we have clear and simple reason why, as Mosheim expresses it, delirious men set themselves up for the Messiah (for supply is regulated by demand, as well in Messiahs as in corn), and the whole secret of the many *false Christs* who appeared by the shoal at the period treated of, is this—the stupid credulousness of the people, who, doing little else but gape about for the fulfilment of the prophecies, became the easy prey of every shallow impostor; for, as somebody has remarked, knaves just as naturally prey upon fools, as worms do upon dead bodies. For an account of these impostors, we refer the reader to Milner’s History of the Jews, Josephus, and other writers on the same subject; as want of space will only allow us to notice one or two. Dositheus, a Samaritan, of whom Mosheim says, “he lived about the time of our Saviour (*query, what time, Mosheim, and which Saviour?*), and set himself up for the Messiah, whom God had sent to the Jews.” The same observation

holds true with respect to Simon Magus, who opposed himself openly to the Divine Saviour, *and assumed to himself the title of the supreme God.*" "Another wrong-headed teacher (says the same writer) named Menander, a Samaritan also, by birth, appeared in this century (the first), who should rather be ranked with the lunatics, than with the heretics of antiquity, seeing he also took it into his head, to exhibit himself to the world as the *promised Saviour!* Now, who does not see that when such "lunatics" could start up like mushrooms after a smart shower, and find whole masses of *gilpins* ready to follow them—that the fanaticism of the latter must have been of a stark staring mad character; nor did Mosheim, in publishing such facts, seem to be at all aware of the strong case he was making out *against the existence of the man Jesus*; for if Jesus had lived and astonished the Jews, as all parties represent him to have done, is it probable, nay is it possible, a crowd of impostors, such as those named above, could have met with such astonishing success; and what must surprise every reflecting mind is, that little more than thirty years after the supposed death of Jesus the Jews either knew, or heeded so little, all that had been said and written about Jesus and his miracles, that, as may be seen in Josephus, (v. 6, ch. 6), "what did most elevate them in undertaking a certain war (against the Romans) was an ambiguous oracle found in their sacred writing, how, about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth." The same writer also says in his (Antiq. 27. ch. 2), that "the Pharisees persuaded Pheroras, Herod's brother, that he was the predicted king, who would have all things in his power;" to be sure, the priests saw the necessity of fulfilling, if possible, the prediction, by *getting up a Messiah*; for a fanaticized people, like a spoiled child, must have its *lollipop*, when its heart is set upon it, which those who manufacture, must take care is sufficiently sweet, for folly of all kinds has a liquorice tooth; and all pretenders who rely upon it for fortune, must, like the enthusiast mentioned by Josephus, who set up Messiah, *think lying of little consequence*, and contrive *every thing so that the multitude may be pleased.*" Then they surely succeed; or in vulgar phraseology, *do the trick.* That many "*false Christ's*" appeared, cannot, therefore, be matter of surprise—but it would have been surprising, indeed, if the true one had! seeing the then distracted state of the Jewish people, which rendered it impossible for them to unite for any great national, still less universal, purpose, without which union, it was quite impossible they could

re-establish their supremacy, or give the law to nations. Here, however, we must turn to Hennel, who maintains that "it is in times of strong excitement such men as Jesus appear," which is not denied; and only shews how necessary it is to be on our guard, when there are so many enthusiastic minds born of a certain era, in selecting one as *the* enthusiast out of the many. But Hennel committed the common and ludicrous blunder of attempting to shew that Jesus was a *mere man*, and not a prophet or God, before taking the trouble to examine or shew that such a man as *the* Jesus actually existed—that he took for granted, and as we shall presently see, no writer ever so completely and innocently refuted himself. He observes, "all classes of society must from time to time, produce individuals of rare mental superiority. In ordinary times this may remain unseen and dormant; but when some prevalent enthusiasm is abroad, it is quickened into life and action, and breaks forth to public gaze in the form of a great character—(ergo), Jesus, the peasant of Galilee, possessed one of those gifted minds, which are able to make an impression on mankind; and the age in which he lived supplied the stimulus required for its manifestation." We shall pass over his laborious and ingenious attempt to shew that Jesus, though an enthusiast, was also both cunning and ambitious, and thought "*by acquiring the reputation of a miracle worker*, backed by clever preaching, to cause a general rising of the Jewish nation—the expulsion of the Romans—and the election of himself to the throne;" we shall look to metal more attractive, for we repeat, never did refined ingenuity so completely defeat itself, for Hennel has in one short note, destroyed, evidently without his own knowledge, the supposition that Jesus ever existed. Now to the proof of this:

He says,* "The appearance, however, of an enthusiast preaching in the desert their (the Jews) long expected kingdom, produced much excitement throughout Judea;" but mark, reader, in a note to the above passage he says, "In later times, the preaching and sect of John the baptist was lost sight of, owing to the pre-eminence of the successor. But that his (John's) sect was one of much notoriety near his own time, is seen from Acts 18 and 19; for, twenty-three years after his death, Apollos and other Jews, *who had not even heard of Jesus*, were preaching the baptism of John." This admission is at once most extraordinary and most valuable, as it settles entirely the question between Hennel and us; for how is it possible that Apollos and other Jews could, twenty-three years

* See Inquiry into the Origin of Christianity.—Page 21.

after John's death, *preach the baptism of John, without having heard of Jesus?* yet, as Hennel labours to prove, Jesus had actually existed in the time of John. What! could Apollos (Acts 18. 24, 25) "*an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, who taught diligently the things of the Lord,*" could he have known only the baptism of John, and not even have heard of Jesus, if Jesus had really lived?—impossible! and never in the history of theorsing, has there been detected so remarkable an instance of self-refutation, as this of Hennel's, for the above passage completely demolishes the idea to support which, he wrote his book, and shews to the world, the curious spectacle of an author, ingeniously and laboriously attempting to prove that Jesus was *not a God, nor a prophet*, but a clever ambitious man; and then, as though bewitched, indirectly oversetting, by an astounding fact, the belief that any such *man* existed. The fact is so clear, and so startling, that it may defy resistance, and we willingly accord to Hennel the honour of furnishing, without being aware of it, the most conclusive evidence yet adduced by any writer, that the Jesus of the gospels never existed; for it was John who bare record that Jesus was the son of God; it was John made straight the way of the Lord; and can any, not lunatic, suppose it possible that only twenty-three years after John's death, Apollos and others, who were *his disciples*, should never have heard of Jesus, even while they themselves were *preaching the baptism of John*. Were they spoken of as ignorant men, the thing might be supposed possible; but they were preachers of reputation; and Apollos is particularly noted (Acts 18. 25) as a man "*instructed in the way of the Lord.*" Surely this, with the many other authentic and startling facts adduced in this work, amounts to something like an excess of evidence, a sort of out-proving *disproof*. "It is remarkable, continues Hennel, that the writer (Acts) calls these Jews (that is Apollos and others), "*certain disciples.*" Oh! Hennel, Hennel! it is much more remarkable that you should have digged such a bottomless pit for your favourite ideas, and walked with them (your eyes seemingly wide open, perhaps like Lady Macbeth's, with their sense shut) straight into it. The book, however, will be preserved, if only as a relic, quite unique and complete, of literary *felo de se*—a gem of blunders,—for it is unquestionably one of the most *valuable* ever given to the world,—and certainly no writer living or dead, ever so completely demolished, at one blow, his own framework of sophistry. We welcome it as a most apt illustration of the familiar adage, "'tis an ill wind, that blows no one good," for

the ill luck of the talented Hennel, has furnished us with an all-sufficient argument against the existence of Jesus, that no species of sophistry can prevail against. Whether, therefore, we consider the question on natural or supernatural grounds—whether we consider Jesus as an incarnate crucified God, a crucified prophet, or crucified man, put to death for his seditious and novel practises, by the Jews, the belief in his actual existence cannot stand; no, the belief in the Jesus of the gospels must now share the common fate of all falsehood,—the evidence hitherto urged in its support, must fly before the face of the reasons advanced in this work,—and the human mind be for ever freed from the thralldom of a malignant and pernicious superstition!

It is certain, that whether Jesus was a real or ideal character, will be hereafter the grand question in dispute; and all thinkers upon this important subject will form two divisions—one of which may aptly be called Realists, and the other Idealists; for, unquestionably, with the philosophic, there will in future be no difference of opinion as to the *divine*, but simply, *human* character of Jesus. The character of Jesus is either *mythic* or *historic*,—in other words, *real* or *ideal*; the *Realist* will contend that a man called Jesus actually existed; the substance of whose history is to be found in the four gospels; which actuality, they will affirm, receives confirmation in the writings of the Pagans, and others: whereas, the *Idealist* will agree with us, that the character of Jesus is mere fiction, or invention, sprung from the idealism of imaginative men; for, while by historic or real character is manifestly meant *ideas concerning an individual, formed from facts*; by mythic character is meant, *supposed facts concerning an individual, born of imaginative ideas*. Dr. Strauss calls Jesus a *myth*, which is just what we are endeavouring to prove that he is; adopting the definition of a myth given by Bauer, “*a fact invented by the aid of an idea*;” for that which to some will seem a paradox, must be admitted, namely, that *an invented fact is no fact at all*; while little logic is necessary to prove that *invented history is but another name for fiction*. If, therefore, what is related of Jesus is a myth, that is, *a string of inventions*—not *real*, but *supposed* or *imagined* facts—the character of Jesus must be *fiction*—not *truth*; in short, not *real* but *ideal*. The only difference between Strauss and ourselves being this, that we push the truth to its legitimate conclusion,—whereas, he dared not do it.

THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

AS A HUMAN BEING,

DISPROVED!

BY IRRESISTIBLE EVIDENCE, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A GERMAN JEW,

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIANS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

LETTER 30.

WEEKLY.

ONE PENNY.

“I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel. Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. *I*, even *I*, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.”—ISAIAH XLIII. 3, 10, 11.

CHRISTIANS,

As this Letter is the last of the series, it will be useful to consider how far the pledge given in the first has been redeemed. A promise voluntarily made, should, if possible, be scrupulously performed—breaking faith wittingly being decidedly immoral; and all literary deception, a mischievous species of public wrong, demanding a public apology.

The first Letter pledged us to disprove the existence of Jesus Christ, the substance of whose history is contained in the gospels—to disprove it, whether as a god of flesh and blood, an inspired prophet, or mere man. It is confidently believed that this work has disproved his existence, and shewn all sincere Christians to be idolaters; but, whether that conviction is or is not a just one, must be determined by the thinking public, to whom we appeal without fear, having the fullest reliance upon the integrity of their verdict; for the intelligent *vox populi*, if not the voice of God, is the most just, and therefore the safest tribunal to which the advocate of truth can appeal.

The early portion of the work incontestably proved that the Sun was in ancient times the object of adoration, among all people—in the nations of Africa, Asia, Europe, and America—upon the soil of the new as well as the old world; it proved that the name Christ

is but one of many given by men to that apparent source of light, heat, and life. It was shewn by an appeal to facts, defying contradiction, that Christ no more had a real existence than the Chrishna of India, the Adonis of Phenecia, or the Hercules of Egypt and Greece. Chrishna, Adonis, Hercules, Mithra, and a score of others, were personifications of the Sun; and the character of Christ in all its essentials, is but a copy of these, thereby proving the gospel history an imposition; or, in the words of our first Letter, *an idle tale, having no foundation whatever in truth,—a mere fiction—stolen from the mythological fables of ancient nations.*

By reference to scripture texts it has been demonstrated that the history of Jesus Christ, as set forth in the gospels, and as commonly received, must be false; for the texts prove, either, that the gospel account is allegoric, that is, expresses one thing and means another, having no literal truth; or those who insist upon a literal interpretation, and are willing to abide by the naked meaning—who insist that Jesus Christ actually lived and was really crucified, will be forced to admit that he was crucified three times over, at three different places; which extraordinary scriptural evidence, as it involves a contradiction, and an absolute impossibility, must utterly destroy the belief that Jesus was actually crucified.

These Letters have also made manifest that *when* Jesus Christ was born, is now a mystery, and was equally a mystery among the first Christians, who knew literally nothing about so important a matter,—each sect, as Mosheim observes, holding contradictory opinions thereupon. As to where the infant Saviour first saw the light, it is a question involved in obscurity; for though Luke and Matthew agree that he was born in Bethlehem, and the orthodox, as in duty bound, echo the same, yet it is certain, as Dr. Strauss observes, and we have proved, that there is not a single guarantee that Bethlehem was the place of his birth. Christians! who dare think and reason for yourselves, we ask you, is it likely, is it credible, that if the Saviour had come upon earth to regenerate the world—had he been conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, and brought forth by a virgin—that even up to this very day none should know when he was born, or where he was brought forth? Is it credible, nay, is it possible, if such an important personage had really lived, his apostles would have failed to make everything known respecting his earthly career? whereas, even now, none know where he was born, or when; Christians, ancient and modern, holding contradictory opinions thereupon; which is a strong collateral

proof that he was not born at all ; besides, the *probability* of Mosheim is annihilated by the impossibility of the circumstances,—for he thought it probable the infant Jesus was born about a year and six months before the death of Herod ; but alas ! the unlucky bungler, Luke, not being chronologically inspired, seemingly having the most profound contempt for mental, and every other species of arithmetic, has “by slight mistakes,” blown-up the whole story ; for, as though his brains had been made of bran, or some equally soft material, he makes Mary pregnant with Jesus when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, that is, ten years after the death of Herod ; so, according to this *probable* invention, the virgin-mother was pregnant with the Saviour ten years after the said Saviour was born ! This could not be believed, even though it had been written under the influence of inspiration, with a quill from the wing of the Angel Gabriel himself.

The insanity of looking for truth with regard to the origin of the Christian fiction, in the early writings of the church, has been fully pointed out, as also the very equivocal character of the gospels, so snugly and carefully selected—pronounced genuine, to boot, by men of such easy virtue as the early saints, who “were canonized by the ignorance of the times,” and the early fathers, who, like Synesius, thought, as darkness suits the blear-eyed better than light, so falsehood was better fitted for the vulgar than truth. It may be fairly presumed that such unique specimens of holiness would treat the people as blear-eyed, to whom the full blaze of intellectual light would be highly prejudicial ; in short, this work has so shewn-up the old curiosities, called saints and fathers, that all must feel, the less said about them the better for their reputation ; for, like the quack doctors of our own times, their business was to physic the fools—of course, in a spiritual sense ; in one point, they agreed to a tee with the mesmerizers of our own times, which is, that there is one nature, one disease, and one cure—that nature a fallen one ; its disease, knowledge ; its cure, delusion—delusion—and nothing but delusion ! These were the spiritual quacks who voted which should be the true life of Jesus—the genuinely inspired gospels. Who will wonder, then, that they should, as Gibbon said of Eusebius, “relate or select whatever might redound to the glory of their own church, and suppress all that could tend to bring disgrace on their religion.” Of their extraordinary ignorance we have left ourselves no room to speak ; but thus much may be said, that no set of men ever carried on such a profitable trade in humbug, with so little intellectual

capital ; whilst their cruel vindictiveness made them the ever-ready aiders and abettors of all villainies useful to orthodoxy. These, or such as these, pious and holy men it was, who pricked on Constantine, and the other diademed scamp, Theodosius, to issue infamous decrees that all writings adverse to the claims of the Christian religion should be committed to the flames ! If such authorities are to be quoted as respectable, heaven help us from such respectability !—if such men were pious and holy, who can be impious and unholy ? Surely the authority of such sinful saints, and childish quackish fathers, is sufficient to bear down any cause it is brought to support ; at all events, the gospels of their choosing are suspiciously odious, and, as we have proved, shew in every page that they were written by characters compounded and re-compounded of knavery and folly.

Next, the forgery of Josephus was fully exposed ; and the whole framework of sophistry urged in favour of the existence as a human being of Jesus, so laboriously and ingeniously constructed by Infidel philosophers, completely demolished. The most remarkable of these writers is Hennel, who, with an industrious ingenuity, worthy of admiration, endeavoured to prove it was beyond question, that Jesus, the peasant of Galilee, actually existed, and played strange pranks in Jerusalem and elsewhere ; being an enthusiast, full of ambitious projects, and a first-rate conjuror, whose hands being much quicker than the best Jews' eyes, did practise slight-of-hand with wonderful dexterity ; but being overreached at last, completely, like the *Diable*, out shot at his own bow, was caught and nailed upon the cross. But, the course of lying, like the course of love, rarely does run smooth ; and Hennel, as shewn in the last Letter, in the very book written to prove that Jesus actually existed, he has unconsciously furnished one of the most astounding facts ever yet adduced in disproof of his existence,—and, as before remarked, never in the history of sophistry was self-refutation so complete.

As to Josephus, it was noted, that he has specially mentioned John the Baptist, but wrote not a line about the man Jesus, or the Christ, and the scandalous forgery of the Christians thereby exposed ; but what will astonish the orthodox still more, is, that this very John the Baptist was a worshipper, not of the man or the god Jesus, but Mithra, the god Sun of the Persians ! This highly important fact has been long known to the literati, and is particularly noticed by Godfrey Higgins, who observes, **“ John the Baptist*

* See *Anacalypsis*, vol. 2, p. 66.

was nothing but one of the followers of Mithra, with whom the deserts of Syria and the Thebais of Egypt abounded, under the name of Essenes. He was a Nazarite ; and it is a striking circumstance that the fountain *Ænon*, or *Enon*, where he baptized, *was sacred to the Sun*. Though said to have baptized Jesus, it is very remarkable that John established a religion of his own," &c. ; remarkable, indeed, it must be to those who believe that Jesus actually existed ; for who can suppose that John would have worshipped the god Mithra, or have set up a religion of his own, had he known Jesus to have been the son of the living God ?

The testimony of Tacitus, that forlorn hope of the *sceptical believer* in Jesus—that pillar of orthodoxy, upon which all classes of Christians so confidently repose, as not to be shaken, has been snapped in this work, with as much ease as Sampson is said to have broken the pillars of the house of Dagon. It is, indeed, a broken pillar, that not only basely failed, but has cruelly wounded those who rested upon it. In plain language, the passage in Tacitus has not only been proved insufficient, but absolutely made to tell against those who used it ; for, fairly examined, it shews this, and nothing more, that the Christians were, in the times of which he wrote the history, a despicable sect, only known as the professors of a malignant superstition—"men who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were branded with deserved infamy." Again, Suetonius speaks of one Christ exciting sedition under Claudius, at Rome ; while Tacitus writes of a certain Christ, put-to-death by Pontius Pilate, at Jerusalem, in the reign of Tiberius ; which conflicting evidence, as before urged, not merely balance, and, as it were, hold each other in equilibrio, but are mutually destructive,—at most, their joint effect is to shew that there did exist in Jerusalem, and at Rome, a sect called Christian (which no one ever dreamt of denying), while they leave untouched the only question which really concerns us, namely, the actual existence of the god, prophet, or man, called Jesus, who is described in the gospels.

With regard to Dr. Strauss, and his "*Life of Jesus*," we feel much pleasure in expressing our admiration of his great ability ; but, as said by a German critic, "*The Leben Jesu* of Dr. Strauss is not properly a life of Jesus, but rather a critical comparison and analysis of the apocryphal and canonical gospels ; though the work is worthy of all praise as a stupendous monument of patient and

laborious research, it is really no more a *Leben Jesu* than a life of Casper Hauser, or Alexander Selkirk."

It would have been easy to have swollen this little work into a ponderous tome, by piling proof upon proof against the existence of Jesus; but were we to write for an age, it would be impossible to do more than disprove his existence, which, it is presumed, is in this work effectually done. Those who will not read what is here written, it is obvious, will not be convinced by its arguments. Such as decide without examination, are bigots!—and wisdom is the price of bigotry. Those who have not the courage to examine it, are fettered by their fears—a mental condition beyond the reach of moral surgery: and as to those who cannot reason, they are the fools of society—the prescriptive property of knaves. All of the latter class have a kingdom not of this world, that is, the world of reason and reality, but one in regions somewhere beyond the moon; the willing dupes of such worthies as Tertullian, who, in the true spirit of the faithful, says, "Why am I not ashamed of maintaining that the Son of God was born? Why, *because* it is itself a shameful thing. I maintain that the Son of God died. Well; that is wholly credible, *because it is monstrously absurd*. I maintain that after having been buried he rose again; and that I take to be unquestionably true, *because it is absolutely impossible*."—Those who with Tertullian will maintain all this farrago of absurdities, and more, if necessary, will not be moved by this book, except to burn it, or to see it burned by the common hangman.

In conclusion; though to the critical eye this work may appear disfigured by imperfections—by all who look for bold and wholesome truth, it will be hailed as one of the most useful that has ever issued from the press. A work which has forced its way to public notice, under circumstances the most discouraging and difficult,—not the least of these was the spiteful—frantic opposition of bigot theologians; those interpreters of celestial things, who, when the spark of truth is thrown among them, are explosive and dangerous as gunpowder; in short, it has furnished irresistible evidence in Disproof of the Existence of Jesus Christ, in spite of bigots, who will not reason; slaves, who dare not reason; and fools, who cannot reason!

THE END.









